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The Week

PRESIDENT Hoover's scheme for a one-year moratorium on war debts and reparations, which we discuss at length elsewhere in this issue, has had an electric effect upon stock markets throughout the world. The boom in prices in New York, London and Berlin is less a reflection of the actual merits of the proposal, in an economic sense, than of the depressed situation into which it came, and the hope that it may be the forerunner of further steps of far greater importance. It alters the psychological situation in France and makes it much harder for that country to reject the scheme. The increment in the paper value of securities in the first three days after the announcement of Mr. Hoover's intentions ran into billions of dollars; the increase in the price of wheat, corn, oats and cotton on Monday alone is estimated in a Chicago dispatch to The New York Times to have added $300,000,000 to the value of this year's crops, or $54,000,000 more than the United States would forego during this year if the war-debt moratorium were in effect. Much or all of this increase may subsequently be canceled; but the fact of the advance is full of significance nevertheless. If such a feeble beginning toward readjustment of the European situation produces such a prompt and vigorous response, what might we not expect if the United States were to initiate measures looking toward removal of all the barriers to normal economic life, including debts, reparations and prohibitive tariffs?

THE British unemployment-insurance fund has for a long time been making payments which exceeded its normal revenue; its indebtedness is now about half a billion dollars, and is likely to increase substantially. Americans who are hostile to such insurance are using this fact as an argument that the plan is a failure, and that the United States should have nothing to do with such schemes. But in fact, the difference between the British situation and our own is very much smaller than they suggest. We, also, are spending many millions of dollars of government money for the relief of the unemployed—probably at least $100,000,000 a year at the present time—though in our case it comes out of municipal and county taxes and not from the federal treasury. Add to this the tremendous burden met in this country through private charity (much of which is haphazard, inefficient and inadequate to the tasks it undertakes) and the burden Great Britain is carrying assumes far less formidable proportions in comparison with our own. Another point often overlooked is that the British recipients of "the dole," knowing they can count upon regular payments over a definite period of time, do not hesitate to make expenditures for the necessities of life, whereas the uncertainty of American charity causes every possible penny to be hoarded. Economists believe that expenditures from insurance funds in Great Britain have been of tremendous help to retail trade during the depression. We wish that the enemies of unemployment insurance in this country, of whom Mr. Hoover is No. 1, could be persuaded to look honestly for once at all the factors which are involved.

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GENERAL Juan Vicente Gomez is once more *de jure,* as well as *de facto,* dictator of Venezuela. The republic's congress has called on him to complete the unexpired term of his figurehead, Señor Juan Bautista Perez, who was elected for a seven-year term in 1929. General Gomez, *El Benemerito,* had grown tired of being called a tyrant, and had decided to have in the future at the "visible" head of the nation a respectable individual—Señor Perez was president of the supreme court—who at the same time was subservient enough to do his bidding. Just to make sure, however, General Gomez, who had kept Venezuela since 1908 under as tyrannical a rule as has been known on this side of the Atlantic, retained supreme command of the army. The Venezuelan Constitution provided that the president should be commander-in-chief of the armed forces, but it was reformed in 1929. Like all South American constitutions, it is *papel mojado* (wet paper) in the dictator's hands. It will be "reformed" once more this year, in order that the President may continue as commander-in-chief.

WHY Gomez decided to come back is not clear from cabled dispatches. The dictator evidently was not pleased with the state of affairs and his dissatisfaction has been reflected in the acts of his abject congress, which in theory elects the President. Some inkling may be derived from the fact that, according to letters received in New York, more than 1,000 persons have been jailed in the last three or four weeks. There are now over 5,000 political prisoners languishing in Venezuelan dungeons which would curdle the blood of a Torquemada. The depression in the oil markets has hit Venezuela hard; and the combination of political dissatisfaction and economic troubles may be extremely serious. General Gomez, who since 1908 has amassed a fortune estimated to be at least $300,000,000, has used the nation to promote his personal enterprises first—leaving for the people the crumbs of the sumptuous feast which visited them with the booming years following the entrance of foreign capital on a vast scale. Whether the American and other oil companies interested in Venezuela, which support General Gomez, "recommended" that he return to the presidency may never be known. It is becoming certain, however, that the people's sentiment is rapidly coalescing and turning not only against Gomez, but against "foreign interests" as well.

THE American mayors who barged in from France this week, should, it seems to us, be granted a vote of thanks by the French nation. Not only did they put on the best show that country has seen since P. T. Barnum toured Europe with his strange people; they also fulfilled in every particular the conception of the average American which a Frenchman may have gathered from reading the works of Mr. Sinclair Lewis. Their speeches, or at least the reports of them which drifted across the sea, were in the best Rotarian style; their praise of their home towns was exactly what could have been expected; and the dramatic gesture of Mayor Porter of Los Angeles in flouncing out of a banquet at which France was being toasted in demon champagne, exclaiming as he went that he did not mean to be a party to "such law breaking," must have given even further strength to the Frenchmen's conviction that all Americans are the maddest of Puritans. Let us suggest, if the French can stand other such shows, a crew of gangsters be imported by them next summer to exhibit the best American methods of putting a rival on the spot and taking beer barons for a one-way ride.

A LETTER printed in this issue of The New Republic offers an interesting sequel to the story of the Arkansas farmers who revolted against starvation. H. C. Coney, the author of the letter, was also the leader of the peaceful revolt. When Red Cross relief funds ceased to be distributed in Lonoke County, because the local supply of application blanks was exhausted, Mr. Coney drove into the town of England with forty starving tenant farmers. The demonstration was successful. No firearms were displayed, no violence was offered; there was no crime to charge against Mr. Coney or his friends, but nevertheless the authorities have apparently managed to revenge themselves upon him. Like most tenant farmers in the county, Mr. Coney is penniless; once the Red Cross had withdrawn its brief assistance, he depended on a government loan to tide his family over till his forty-one acres of cotton could be harvested. He applied for a loan. He says in his letter—and we are aware of no reason to doubt his statements—that $195 was assigned him by the central office in Memphis, but that the local authorities, acting with the full force of the United States government behind them, canceled the advance. On the whole this strikes us as a pretty mean-spirited revenge to be inflicted by the most powerful government in the world on an Arkansas tenant farmer.

ON PAGE 173 of this issue of The New Republic appears an article by Gardner Jackson ("A Hoover Expert Walks the Plank") describing the dismissal of Dr. Ray Hall from his post in the Department of Commerce at Washington. Dr. Hall says that his dismissal was due to his reluctance to change some of the figures and interpretations in his annual report, "The Balance of International Payments of the United States," when such changes would have reflected favorably on the policies of the Hoover administration. His superior officer, Grosvenor M. Jones, insists that this is not true, and accuses Dr. Hall, among other things, of "unwillingness to accept suggestions, disinclination to follow instructions, insolence and disrespect," also stating that bureau officials have lost confidence in his judgment. In a case of this sort,

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which is similar to the dismissal of a college professor, it is of course very difficult for outsiders to pass judgment on the merits of the controversy, or to say to what extent the action taken is based upon actual attempt at censorship and to what extent upon temperamental incompatibility. We print Mr. Jackson's article as important news, which it is; we feel that he states both sides of the controversy fairly and our readers may draw their own conclusion. It is necessary to remember, however, that the Hoover administration has a bad record in regard to the misuse of experts' findings. If it is now suspected of evil where perhaps none exists, its own past sins are to blame.

THE Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor has just published an exhaustive study of women's wages in thirteen states, made before the present depression, which shows in one more important respect how far our economic order is from justice or efficiency even when we are supposedly prosperous. In manufacturing industries, the median weekly earnings of women ranged between a high point of $19.13 in Rhode Island and a low of $8.35 in Mississippi. The longer the hours, as a rule, the lower the earnings. Comparing the earnings with estimates of minimum living costs for single women, the Bureau concludes "that most of the industrial workers in practically all the states included in the present study earned amounts too low for adequate subsistence." The growth of profits and of productivity during the period would have made possible considerably higher wages. Why were they not forthcoming? Because, in our competitive and unplanned order, wages are determined, not by what ought to be or can be paid, but by what wage earners can be hired for. The supply of women in the labor market is sufficient in relation to the demand so that wages are kept down; there are enough women who will take less so that those who need more cannot get it.

LABOR won an important victory in California recently when Judge Lamberson upset the convictions in the famous Imperial Valley criminal-syndicalism cases. The sentences, which ran from three to forty-two years, were the longest ever imposed in the United States solely for strike propaganda; they grew out of the attempt on the part of the convicted men to organize the cantaloupe and lettuce pickers, who were being ruthlessly exploited by the ranch owners of the Imperial Valley. Of the eight men convicted, one was freed by Judge Lamberson's decision, five were cleared of all charges except that [illegible] advocating doctrines prohibited [illegible] ...eous criminal-syndi[illegible]s were not [illegible]g sen-[illegible]ision. [illegible] a

tion of California's notorious anti-labor legislation; and the fact that this case was the first attempt to enforce the criminal-syndicalism law since the war hysteria subsided makes the decision doubly significant.

THE facility with which politicians can turn almost any given set of conditions into political capital must sometimes amaze those unfamiliar with the sprightly game of politics. In Arizona, for instance, the last week of May was celebrated as "Copper Tariff" week. Governor G. W. P. Hunt, theoretically a "low tariff" Democrat, is shedding crocodile tears for the copper producers of his state. Western Senators and Congressmen are climbing on the band wagon. In spite of unspoken opposition from most of the larger producing companies, the demands of the miners themselves to protect their "high wages" are likely to be crowned with success. Domestic mines, so the tariff argument runs, have higher costs than foreign ones—largely because of their higher wage scales. Domestic production has not been growing as fast as domestic consumption. Some "experts" have even figured out that the United States is no longer self-sufficient in copper production. Actually, this is not true. The 1930 report of the United States Bureau of Mines shows an excess of production of domestic copper over domestic consumption of 62,500 tons. The wages argument can be refuted by pointing out that some of the domestic mines, paying high wages, have costs as low as any abroad. The high-cost producers are handicapped by low-grade deposits. A copper tariff would not add a pound of copper to the content of their ore. But the best argument against the copper tariff is to point to its sister nonferrous metals—lead and zinc. Both are protected by ample tariff barriers, yet in the current depression, domestic production has fallen off more than foreign. Deposits that would never have been brought into production save for the tariff are now lying idle and towns that have been stimulated into existence by their exploitation are the refuges of idle hundreds.

A Reprieve for Germany

PRESIDENT Hoover has at last done what it was inevitable that he must—taken official action for the relief of the critical situation in Germany. It was none too soon, and indeed, the great question remaining is whether it was soon enough. The financial situation in the Reich has grown increasingly precarious in the past week. The German government's new program of taxation, made necessary because she is finding it steadily harder to meet her reparations payments, has evoked from the country such a surly response that foreign creditors have become alarmed. They have feared that

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repudiate reparations, while the Communists would probably repudiate all other external debts as well. In these circumstances, foreign interests with money in Germany have been getting it out as rapidly as possible, and there has also been an evident "flight from the mark" by the Germans themselves. The result has been an almost unprecedented drain upon the gold reserve of the Reichsbank, which by the end of last week had dropped very nearly to the 40-percent minimum permitted by law. Bankruptcy for Germany is just around the next corner.

Official representatives of the American government abroad have for some time been reporting this situation to Mr. Hoover; but for that matter, reading the foreign financial news in any New York paper should have been sufficient. At any rate, Mr. Hoover, who has delayed so long in taking any steps whatever, has at last acted. He proposes a one-year moratorium on all war debts owed by European countries to the United States, provided that each of these governments also gives a similar moratorium to all its debtors, including Germany. America's debtors can of course obtain a one-year moratorium in regard to the principal of the debt at any time, at their own option. But under the terms of the agreements, interest payments must be kept up, and these amount to by far the greatest part of the present annual total—in the case of Great Britain, for example, four-fifths.

The consent of Congress is necessary before a moratorium on interest can be arranged. The war-debt payments are made twice yearly, on June 15 and December 15, and the June payments have all been made. Although Mr. Hoover proposes that the year's moratorium shall begin on July 1, with the start of the American government's fiscal year, actually he intends that this country shall take no official action until Congress meets on December 7 next, only eight days before the next instalment on the war debts is due. He ignores the possibility that Europe might in the meantime take action based upon his plan, and that Congress might then repudiate the proposal; and in this he is probably right. There can be little doubt that Congress will consent to the one-year moratorium, and particularly after he has obtained the pledges of so many leaders of both parties to stand by it.

A graver question is whether one or more European countries may not sabotage the enterprise. Mr. Hoover has made a great point of the fact that all the debtor nations must agree to the scheme before he will attempt to put it through. There are fourteen of these countries, not including Germany and Austria: Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Esthonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Rumania and Jugoslavia. There is always the possibility, with a round-robin agreement of this sort, that some power will try to hold up the scheme until it is paid heavily in one way or another for cooperating. As

larger than they are paying to their creditors, Mr. Hoover's scheme means serious financial loss. In the case of France, for instance, the curtailment of revenue during the next year (assuming that Germany could continue to pay) would be about $100,000,000. The first reaction from France was based on this fact, and was a suggestion that much preferable would be a plan whereby the Allies got a moratorium while Germany fulfilled her obligations.

As our readers do not need to be told, the attitude of France is the real sticking point, once the United States has agreed to make some concession, however small. France demands reparations from Germany partly because she wants the money and partly because she does not want her ancient enemy across the Rhine to become powerful again. Through her system of alliances with Poland and the Little Entente she dominates western Europe, and this position she proposes to keep at any cost. French policy has been more consistent and unwavering since the Armistice than that of any other power; and it has been successful by its own standards.

But even should France, alarmed at the danger of German Fascism or Communism, now accept Mr. Hoover's proposal, there is grave doubt whether the plan goes far enough, or has come soon enough. Mr. Hoover is basing his scheme on two ideas, one of which is highly dubious and the other false. He assumes, in the first place, that the industrial depression will have either ended within a year or will be well on the road toward ending. This may or may not be true; many economists believe it will last several years longer. Mr. Hoover also assumes that if prosperity returns, Germany can without serious difficulty pay reparations, and the Allies fulfill their war-debt obligations. But Germany has paid reparations in the past for the most part out of the proceeds of borrowing abroad; she has never succeeded in building up a "favorable" balance of trade which would enable her to make international payments without depressing her currency, and the creation of the Bank of International Payments has not altered this situation in any important way. And even if she could transmit these sums abroad, it is now perfectly clear that her people will not submit to the strain of making payments. The drain upon capital and, more important, the burden upon the working class, are such that no German government can survive, in the long run, which makes an honest effort to meet reparations. The same thing is true, in less degree, of some of the European countries which are paying war debts to Americ[illegible] Britain, for instance, is suffering fror[illegible] causes of which go[illegible] slump. [illegible] from t[illegible]

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to go farther than he is now willing to admit. His persistent linking of European recovery with the question of disarmament has led some observers to believe that he intends to make a definite offer of war-debt reduction in exchange for limitation of war material. Public opinion in the United States on the question of the debts is such that he evidently feels obliged to move with great caution. We should be grateful that after long years of stubborn inaction, of insisting that debts and reparations are not connected, he now connects them and takes at least one first step. The world situation is so serious that the statesmen and journalists of all lands clutch at his suggestion with a desperate eagerness out of any proportion to its possible effect in and of itself.

But while we recognize the tonic effect of hope in a period of darkness, we must not deceive ourselves. A year's delay in payments, plus the psychological value of the feeling that America has at last come back into the European question, may stem the tide in Germany momentarily; but even that is doubtful, and more than that is impossible. Neither France nor America is now prepared to act with real generosity. Mr. Hoover, confronted with the likelihood of Germany's economic collapse, makes the absolute minimum proposal possible. France wants no concessions whatever toward Germany and seems disinclined even to accept Mr. Hoover's suggestion. The plain truth is that the governments of the world do not really want peace and prosperity—France, and America least of all. They do not want these things, that is, enough to pay the price for them. They will not yield their nationalistic policies even though they know that these policies are producing untold suffering and may lead to another war. That is why it is doubtful whether the action taken will be soon enough and drastic enough to prevent a German revolution. That is why it is possible to make a good case for the argument that it may be better if Germany does have a revolution, despite the suffering certain to ensue.

A Bad Outlook for China

DESPITE all the appearances of the last year, the hope that China had at last achieved unification is evidently abortive. Another civil war seems to be brewing. With the population suffering from the effects of the world depression, accentuated by the decline in silver, with bandits ravaging large areas and Communist and so-called Communist armies threatening to take control of whole provinces, the only forces for stabilization and order are preparing to hurl themselves against each other in organized warfare.

Events in China never quite come up to the doleful predictions of foreign correspondents stationed there; but even if the war does not materialize, the

inseure. The principle of authority has been challenged. If the group now threatening secession does not succeed, the fact that such a threat can still be made will encourage similar ones in the future. No matter what the result of the present movement in the south will be, rebellion remains the most effective political weapon. In other words, there is no assurance of peace, and without it China can make little progress toward real reconstruction.

Less than two months ago a national people's convention met in Nanking in formal recognition of the end of the "military stage" of the revolution and the inauguration of the period of political tutelage, which is the second stage. A provisional constitution was adopted to signalize the restoration of government by legal processes and with at least partial popular sanction. Even the most skeptical had reason to believe that China was out of the morass of insurrections. The armies which had revolted last year were disbanded and no other threat seemed to be in sight. That was in May. Now the rich and populous province of Kwangtung has set up a quasi-independent government, an important group has resigned from the Nanking government and new nuclei of revolt are forming. The seriousness of the movement is suggested by the fact that Dr. C. C. Wu, Chinese Minister to the United States, has resigned his post in order to throw in his lot with the Cantonese. Incidentally, Dr. Wu, himself a Cantonese, is one of the Chinese best known and most respected in the United States, and his loss is a serious blow to the prestige of the Nanking government.

The causes for the new Southern secessionist movement are not in the least occult or "Oriental." For one thing, there is an instinctive provincialism which resists anything like effective centralization. While Chinese leaders recognize intellectually that under modern conditions, economic as well as political, an agglomeration of semi-autonomous provinces cannot function as the government of a country, instinctively they will not make the surrender of rights which an effective central government implies. This is an instinct deeply rooted in Chinese tradition and it must be reckoned with as a living force.

Another reason, more compelling, is the factor of one of rival personal ambitions. For fifteen years Chinese political issues and civil wars have turned on the unwillingness of powerful military leaders to recognize the authority of any individual or group among them. They do not oppose a centralized government so much as its control by someone other than themselves. In the present situation, Chiang Kai-shek, whose voice has been dominant in Nanking since 1928, is their target. The anti-Red wars in the last three years have had only one object—to drive out Chiang Kai-shek. It is held against him now that the recent national convention was a packed assembly of men subservient to his dictates. That is true. It would have been a packed assembly if any other leader had been dominant in Nanking;

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possibly at the present stage of China's political evolution no other kind of assembly could be brought together, since there is no other machinery for choosing popular representatives.

It is easy from such evidence to generalize about China's "unfitness" and the sinister character or incompetency of its leaders. As a matter of fact, the motives of China's public men are not diabolical. They know that peace is the only desire of the Chinese people now and that a prolongation of civil war would ruin the country. And they prefer peace. But they refuse to give up the rights and perquisites of power which must be given up if there is to be peace.

The fallacy lies in comparing China with a single Western country. China is a continent and must be so considered. It must be compared with all of Europe. France, Germany, Italy and Czechoslovakia also want peace, but their leaders, with the support of their respective publics, refuse to renounce nationalistic ambitions and to make the sacrifices of national egoism without which there can be no peace. China is not alone in refusing to face the fact that peace can be had only at a price. Of China it is fair to say only that its public leaders are demonstrating an ability so to disrupt the collective life of the country that suffering becomes general and catastrophe nearer than ever. But of what country can one not say that in 1931?

Al Capone's Victory

WELL INFORMED Chicagoans differ as to whether Al Capone welcomed his conviction for evasion of federal income tax; but majority opinion seems to be that he did. While he has not yet been sentenced, it seems certain that he will receive only a couple of years' imprisonment and a fine of a few thousand dollars. The fine is nothing at all to a man of his wealth, and his life in the penitentiary will be cushioned by his money and importance, as was the case during his previous prison term in Pennsylvania. He will have a respite from the incessant fear of an assassin's bullet; and a year, or two or three years hence, he can walk out of the prison gates and pick up his business where he laid it down.

Even if we assume, however, that Capone is going most reluctantly to jail, and that the federal officers' victory is as complete as they not at all bashfully insist it is, the incident can still be described only as a victory for its central figure. Here is a man who has for years been the head of one of the bloodiest of the murderous gangs with which all our large cities are now infested. About 500 persons have been killed in Chicago in the past ten years in the bootlegging and other wars in which the Caponites have been engaged, and over and over again, the local newspapers reporting one of these deaths, have openly and calmly stated that it was the work of his men. During this time Capone has sold illicit liquor in amounts running into millions of dollars; he has kept many hundreds of young women in houses of prostitution and taken away from them most of their earnings; he has maintained numerous gambling joints where a sucker with a bankroll stood very little chance of keeping it, to say nothing of making it larger; he has been closely allied with the most loathsome of all traffics, that in habit-forming drugs.

Nevertheless, Chicago, instead of interfering with all this activity on his part and the part of others like him, has knelt helpless at his feet. Enthusiastic young policemen who have tried to maintain the law have been "broken" for their lack of sense. Complaisant judges in their robes have hastily set his henchmen free whenever by accident they got within the toils of the law. Politicians, all the way up to the mayor's office, have taken his dirty money and given immunity. Capone hasn't merely bought the government of Chicago; he has been that government. And so far as we are aware, he still is. The recent election changed one set of unspeakable politicians for another group, not quite so brazen in effrontery but animated by the same set of ideas. The peace and contentment in gangdom today are sufficient evidence that they haven't cleaned up Chicago, and don't intend to.

At the worst, therefore, all that can be said of Capone is that he failed to fix the national government as he fixed that of Chicago (and as far as necessary, the state of Illinois). The national government is harder to fix, though it can be done: *vide* the Ohio Gang during Harding's time, the scandals in connection with tax refunds to numerous wealthy men and corporations, the complaisance of the Federal Power Board and other instances which will rise in the mind of any of our readers. There is no difference in principle between Chicago and Washington; when government by racketeer has gone far enough, no doubt the arrangements which now exist in every city in the country will be extended to the national capital as well. In the meantime, let's hear no more about Capone's defeat. The defeat is Chicago's.

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After Two Years of Farm Relief

WHEN THE Farm Act was placed on the federal statute books it was characterized as one of the most radical pieces of legis- ever put on those carefully guarded pages. was an act creating a governmental agency, to regulate, investigate or procrastinate, but to *something;* and this—to those trusting indi- als whose optimism had not been dampened by y years of Republicanism—was cause for great hope and rejoicing. But the past two years have not rewarded this faith, and the futility of the whole experience in farm relief threatens to enforce once more a placid acceptance of the old maxim that the government can do nothing for the farmer. The Farm Board, once hailed and damned as socialistic, has turned out to be innocuous after all; it will content itself hereafter with "helping the farmer to help himself." Henceforth, the agrarians may look to their government only for sympathy, advice and the weather forecast. It is apparent now, even to Senator Borah, that Mr. Hoover does not propose to violate the tenets of his Republican- with his farm-relief program.

But does this Farm Act really exhaust the possi- ities of relief? Is it an honest effort or is it adow-boxing? Farmers have a right to know e answers to these questions as the first two years f farm relief draw to a lame close in a welter of pessimism and general indifference, and as they are being urged to accept Mr. Hoover's program to e exclusion of other proposals.

The expressed intent and purpose of the Farm t is to place agriculture upon an economic equal- with industry. (One wonders now at the eté which prompted the selection of industrial ll being as a goal for agriculture!) Toward the lment of this objective it proposes the following:

1. To minimize speculation in agricultural products.
2. To prevent inefficient and wasteful methods of distribution.
3. To encourge the organization of producers for marketing their products coöperatively.
4. To prevent and control agricultural surpluses.

From the foregoing it is apparent that the Farm t presumes the ills of agriculture to lie primarily s marketing system. But this is a shallow diag- s. Agriculture is the victim of the planless and ontrollable competitive economy which suffices ensure its prosperity only when the sea of events undisturbed, as it rarely is, by such things as chnological revolution and world-wide economic nges. The farmer's situation, bad enough at best, has been further aggravated by unequal tariff treatment, an antiquated tax system and the growth of monopoly in many industries whose products he must buy. These issues and their ramifications are stupendous; clearly they are not adequately recognized in Mr. Hoover's relief legislation. With elephants to be bagged, the Farm Board is sent forth to chase butterflies.

Pursuant to the first provision of the Act, the Board has made an attack upon speculation in agricultural products. Such speculation has always been under criticism by many people who have never been able to see clearly the economic functions which it performs and who consequently look upon the speculative exchanges as dens of gambling and iniquity. So when the Farm Board, armed with $500,000,000 and clothed in virtue, descended into the grain pit and put the bears to rout in the name of price stabilization, its action was hailed as like unto that of the Master when He drove the money-changers into the street. Even when it became generally apparent that this was folly, it was excused as being "courageous" and as proving beyond a doubt that Mr. Hoover's administration had the interest of the farmer at heart. As a matter of fact it proved nothing of the sort. Of course abuses and malpractices have sprung up in connection with future trading in farm products, and to defend the institution of speculation is not to condone these. But to pretend to look here for substantial farm relief is political buffoonery.

The second objective of the Farm Act—to prevent inefficient and wasteful methods of distribution—gives voice to another mistaken criticism of the agricultural marketing system. The margin between what the producer receives and what the consumer pays is a source of never ending worry to many who profess to see all manner of sinister things here. Indeed, reputable economists have assembled statistics purporting to show that the cause of the agricultural depression is to be found in this situation. But too often it is forgotten that the margins of distribution resolve themselves largely into wages, not profits. That these margins have widened since the War may be due simply to the lag of wages, plus the fact that the consumers are demanding more in the way of services. It is hard to see just what the Farm Board can do about this. Furthermore, the wastes in distribution occur at both ends of the system, not in the middle. The duplication of labor and capital in the retailing of agricultural products is regrettable, but agriculture is not unique in this; if there are too many grocery stores, there are also too many filling stations, drug stores and broom vendors.

The third proposal of the Act, which relates to coöperative marketing, has been the keystone

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of the Farm Board's program. Largely due to its efforts, coöperation has become the fetish of the hour in agriculture and is being bandied about as a sort of general panacea, sufficient in its all-comprehending efficacy to cure whatever may be the trouble with the farmer. All too often, however, the possibilities of coöperative marketing are being discussed in qualitative rather than quantitative terms. One wonders at times whether it is the way out for the farmer or the Republican party.

The aspect of the coöperative movement which at first seems most arresting is its economic philosophy. It is a way of marketing agricultural products, not for profits, but in the interests of producers who shall share in the benefits of the system in proportion to the amount of their produce so handled, rather than in proportion to capital invested. The motive is service, not profits. But lest we wax too enthusiastic over this seeming idealism, let us not forget that agricultural cooperatives are aimed at obtaining a more even balance of power for the farmer in relation to other groups. It is a vocational movement first, last and always. As such it is as commendable in purpose as the labor-union movement, but to say that it is directed to ultimate social harmony and that it removes the seeds of economic strife is naïve, for it stops far short of embracing all the elements of society. It is associationism, not socialism.

If coöperative marketing is to place more money in the pockets of the farmers, it must do so either by raising prices to the consumer or by narrowing the margins of distribution. Despite the fact that responsible farm leaders realize that coöperatives cannot raise prices arbitrarily, the majority of farmers are more or less enthralled by these possibilities. Nothing is more common than the drawing of analogies, by people who ought to know better, between giant farmer coöperatives and the great industrial monopolies. However, monopoly power springs from control of the *quantity* of supply and not from the *marketing* of it; and so long as the former is the resultant of the individual choices of six million intensely competitive producing units, it is absurd to imagine that coöperatives will ever become monopolistic. Of course the Farm Board itself does not subscribe to the belief that coöperative marketing can aid farmers by raising prices arbitrarily; but this does not change the fact that there are many agrarians who do think so and who ought to be disillusioned in plain and unmistakable language.

The alternative to raising prices is to narrow the margins of distribution, thereby netting the farmer the difference. Assuming for a moment that coöperative marketing could do this, the benefit would accrue to him only if production were not increased, but coöperatives cannot control this. Moreover, as has been pointed out, the possibilities of cutting the costs of distribution are distinctly limited. The middleman can be displaced, but his erstwhile services still must be performed: substitution of one agency for another is not a reorganization of the system. Another belief, or rather a suspicion, is that the middlemen are demanding exorbitant profits for their services—that the farmer i great disadvantage in bargaining. But so long there is competition among the buyers the int of the seller are safeguarded, no matter how and unorganized he may be. There may be isolated instances in which the trade is in coll against the farmer, but this is not the case erally. Certainly it is not with those great agric tural staples for which prices are made in auctic or exchanges. In the frenzied search for a "goat for the agricultural depression, such claims agains the present marketing system are likely to be grossly exaggerated.

The ultimate possibilities of coöperation are not only vague and somewhat imaginary, but the task of perfecting the necessary organization is so great and the whole thing is so remote in time that the movement has almost no place in a program for aiding this generation of farmers. And, after all, this is the thing of moment. Much of this preoccupation with long-time programs for agriculture, to which the Farm Board is so given, is largely irrelevant to the whole situation. Eventually agriculture will cure itself anyhow, by the process of "bleeding." Emergency legislation must therefore b directed to the seat of the immediate difficulty—: the control of agricultural surpluses. The Far Act, despite its misplaced emphasis on marketing did not miss the point altogether and proposed to cope with these surpluses by means of an acreage-reduction program and the ill fated price-stabilization schemes which we shall analyze next.

As a sop to the discontented agrarian element which had demanded the equalization fee and the export debenture, the Farm Act provided fc stabilization corporations to aid in controlling agr cultural surpluses. According to the provisions of the Act these corporations, financed with government funds, were to purchase and withhold from the market a portion of the price-crushing surpluses. Inasmuch as these corporations would have to liquidate their holdings eventually, it is impossible to see just what good such a procedure could be for those products affected with a permanent surplus. Yet notwithstanding the inanity of the proposal, so firm was the faith of the people in the "Great Engineer" that it was hailed with de light. The wonder is not that these price-stabiliza tion measures failed, but that anyone could hav expected them to do otherwise. The only way th government could have aided the American farm by such methods would have been for it to have dumped its holdings abroad for whatever they would bring in order to clear the domestic markets. But this would have been only a backhanded way of doing what the export debenture and the equaliza tion fee were designed to do—and Mr. Hoover

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professes to find these measures very offensive to his delicate sense of political economy.

If the trouble with the farmers is that they produce too much, and granted that they would all be better off if they produced less, then why not inform them of the fact and suggest that they reduce acreage? This seemed reasonable to Mr. Legge, so with his entourage he went into Kansas in the summer of 1930 to plead for curtailed wheat production. As the price of wheat is a world price, he should, in order to give the plan a chance for success, have taken Russia, Canada and Argentina into his plans also. Or perhaps the desire was simply to make the tariff on wheat effective. If so, there were more efficacious ways of doing this with the export debenture or the equalization fee. But we may pass over these preliminary considerations as lightly as the Farm Board evidently did. After Mr. Legge and his assistants had spent a summer in cajoling the Kansas farmers, those unruly fellows reduced their acreage exactly 1.1 percent, and even this magnificent response is to be attributed more to unfavorable conditions at seeding time than to the Board's efforts. Were these farmers stupid, stubborn? They were neither—they were acting just as any set of economically rational men would act. It was to the interest of each and every one of them to produce wheat and more wheat so long as its price was sufficient to cover the relatively small out-of-pocket expenses and to contribute something to the overhead. All of this is so trite as scarcely to need pointing out, yet Mr. Legge was greatly chagrined at what seemed to him to be brazen stupidity, and it is not yet clear to him why farmers do not adjust production to consumption like big business men. (Indeed, with six million laborers out of work!)

Agriculture has, to use George Soule's expression, always walked backwards, adjusting itself to situations beyond its control and reacting to price stimuli like an amoeba reacting to heat and cold. But these are days when the world is beginning to think in terms of planned economy, and the concept must be applied to agriculture as well as to industry in so far as is possible. Let us, however, go at the problem in agriculture with a realization of the fact that it is the most intensely competitive of all industries. Recent statements emanating from the Farm Board indicate that it feels that coöperative organization of farmers will go far toward rationalizing agricultural production. A moment's thought, however, must show that no superstructure of organization can do much to guide and control this unless it can limit the production of each individual farmer. But this is impossible. The initiative in seeking to limit the production of an industry so intensely competitive as agriculture must come largely from the government with an intelligent land policy intended to remove as much land from cultivation as possible. The Farm Act does not provide even the germs of such a policy.

The administration, having seen its relief legislation tried and found wanting, is now engaged in trying to convince the agrarians that it has made a sincere effort to aid them. But has it? Has Mr. Hoover's Farm Act really come to the aid of agriculture with all the instruments—instruments which at best are woefully inadequate—at the command of a democracy? The answer is that it has not. No administration which has passed the Smoot-Hawley tariff, which at the same time refuses to deal with the surplus problem either by the equalization fee or the export debenture, which makes no effort toward tax reform, which takes no steps in the direction of a sound land policy, which maintains an outworn philosophy with regard to all modern economic problems—no such administration has exhausted the possibilities of farm relief.

The Farm Act has turned out to be such a dud that not even a chairman of the Republican National Committee will have the temerity to "point with pride." Torn between a desire to avoid the more radical proposals and at the same time to appease popular demands for something, Mr. Hoover has attempted to divert attention from the real issues and to focus it on the marketing system of agriculture. And naturally having failed to get any results in the way of relief, his Farm Board now professes to be engrossed on a long-time program for agriculture in the hope that the farmer will get his mind off his own troubles and anticipate those of his grandchildren. It is an old ruse, but it usually works.

A. C. HOFFMAN.

Open Winter

Bleak as split granite the fall plowing lies,
Barren and dead the frozen stalks of grass
Along the fence where the farm buildings rise
In huddled mass.

Gaunt on the night, the woods beyond the yard
Push their cold shadows slowly up a road
As harsh as broken metal and as hard
As iron lode.

And like a failing breath, a single thread
Of misty smoke climbs motionless and still
From the low roof. There is no whisper sped
By house or hill.

It is a clear moon. Every star is white.
The black earth crackles under biting frost.
Oh! Send us soon one long snow-muffled night
Or we are lost!

Earth and man's habitation, both are dumb.
The creeping frost is everywhere, and deep.
Send us the snow before all senses numb
Too near to sleep!

Life's strength wears thin from grappling with an earth
Marked hard and clear and dulled of all that gleams,
Too proud for tears, too literal for mirth,
Too stark for dreams.

CHARLES MALAM.

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May Days in Spain

The Revolution Enters a New Phase

GAUGING the temper of the big battalions is the nub of the affair in a revolution such as the Spanish, initiated by a mass movement which surprised its leaders. Everyone assures you that those battalions are the 300,000 in the trade unions (Largo Caballero's Union General de Trabajadores) and the allied Socialist party's 500,000 votes, the largest in the April 12 election.

"There are left in Spain but two organized forces—Socialism and the Church." When I quote this dictum to the labor chiefs, they rather approve it. "And note this: those others are divided. We are admittedly the only political party in Spain organized on a basis of democracy and discipline. . . . In Toledo, the black capital of Cardinal Segura, the primate of Spain, in one district there were 160 clergy of whom 98 voted Republican. The lower clergy are against the usurped autocracy of the cardinals and bishops. Parish priests denounced the primate's last pastoral letter, which ordered a boycott and blacklist; Catholic employers to fire every Republican or Socialist; plain civil war."

Labor is divided, too. The U. G. T. battalions are none too big. Their writ hardly runs in Catalonia, stronghold of syndicalist unions, whose nonpolitical theory does not prevent practical war on the Socialist unions. Communist strength is "untold" in the estimate of the Monarchists and the Communists. Of concrete figures there are at least these: over 8,000 municipal councilors were elected April 12, but the Communists have only twenty-six. The main stream of revolution, then, lies with the Socialists. Two occasions, on May 1 and May 10-11, have shed light on the disposition of the battalions.

May Day was declared a national holiday, by government decree. The organized mass of about 175,000 paraded in companies behind red banners embroidered with their craft's name and insignia, the dates running back to the early 1890's. They had possession of the hitherto sacred boulevards. Around lay the city vacant and colorful. Not a door open except drug stores and milk depots; hardly a car except the few placarded "Medico." Flags everywhere; clubs and banks flew not only Republican violet but the gaudy house flags they used to display on royal command.

The white-bearded philosopher Miguel de Unamuno and government ministers led the march. The hundreds of red banners (one Communist) included those of unions of shoeblacks, blind musicians, street vendors; railway men, street-car men and postal workers roused the loudest vivas, for their reputation as hell-raisers in the revolution a fortnight before. Policing was entirely in the hands of young men with red arm bands reading "Socialist Militia." Their authority was dumbfounding. Spectators who had taken to trees, fences and lampposts tumbled down from their coveted perches at a wave of a red arm. It was obedience to make a dictator jealous. From the balcony of the presidency, President Zamora reviewed and harangued the multitude to its apparent satisfaction.

The rest of the day they walked in kings' gardens. Casa del Campo, the really vast park beyond the royal palace, was that day opened to the people. With haversacks of food and kegs of wine, in columns that took hours to get through the exclusive gate, they flooded the woods, climbed the hills, swam in the lakes and kept out of places where red armbands said "No."

Unrancorous, satisfied with *tranquilidad,* the crowd's temper could be gathered from their remarks, from the new songs and caricature handbills they flourished, and the punch-and-judy shows they improvised. Boys with paper crowns and suitcases, running madly, represented Alfonso. For Alfonso's last dictator there was hatred, "Death to Berenguer." Well, he was in prison. For the religious orders, open mockery. "Where are the crows today?" since not a black hat could be seen.

I question the Minister of Justice, Professor Fernando de los Rios, a Socialist of many years' standing, who is known in the universities of France, Germany, England and America, about the absence of popular disorder. "Make no mistake about one thing," he says. "This revolution is profound. It has been going on for several years—a fundamental change in the spirit of the Spanish people. What looks like a paradox of a revolution whose parallel I cannot quite recall in history—this turning out an ancient monarchy by ballot—is not an accident, but significant of the new Spain. This revolution will go on, much faster now but orderly."

The anarchist, anti-State tendency of the masses has changed. Countless demonstrations, by trade unions, coöperatives in town and country and Socialist societies, "have given a new idea of the State—an organization to be used."

Since the Socialists cannot win the June 28 elections, "we shall then pass into the opposition, but still obtain Socialist laws in the few years before we become the majority. . . . Meantime, occasions of force may arise. Would you use it?" De los Rios has been in Russia.

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Calm and confident is Luis Araquistain also, the journalist, dramatist and international traveler, now Under-secretary of Labor. "In five to ten years the Spanish republic will be the only nation standing alongside Russia, equal in achievement, but through the methods of order."

So a week went on; the government churning out decrees; explaining Spain over the radio to the world, especially to South America; attending banquets in each other's honor; busy, tolerant, orderly beyond words. The constituted (old regime) military court dismissed the charges against Berenguer; he was released. The ABC published an interview with Alfonso and a permit was given for a Monarchist committee meeting.

On May 10-11, as sudden as thunder, Madrid and a score of other cities (but not Barcelona and the north) were in the hands of the people in the street, and palled over with the smoke of burning convents. For a while there was no government. The mass surprised the leaders, as they had with their vote on April 12 and their seizure of offices on April 14. The fracas which started things was insignificant. Exalted grandees, emerging from their Monarchist meeting, battered a chauffeur who answered their vivas for Alfonso with vivas for the republic. In no time the Sunday-morning throng burned the grandees' limousines and besieged their club. They were glad to be carted off, badly manhandled, by police wagons. Minister Maura was howled down.

The rest of that day Madrid was overrun by mobs. Spontaneously they struck out at three targets—Monarchists, Church and civic guards. They surrounded the costly ABC office and were met by rifle fire from civic guards within. They burned the Catholic daily's kiosk and smashed Catholic bookshops. They stoned the civic guards, who retreated inside buildings. By nightfall they were looting firearm shops of pistols, knives and rifles. Puerta del Sol was solid with humanity. When someone fired a shot there they nearly killed him. They wanted to hear the orators, who were plenty.

One spoke from the balcony of the Ministry of the Interior. He represented a group from no less than the intellectual Athenæum, the free forum to which most members of the government belonged. He had just presented to Minister Maura the group's demands for his resignation, disarmament of the civic guard, suppression of reactionary papers and expulsion of religious orders. This highbrow intervention was cheered to the echo.

Monday morning saw a restlessness in Madrid; many workers stopped in the streets, for they had "heard" there was to be a strike. But nothing could have been more tranquil than Gran Via and the Residence of the Jesuits, a few minutes before ten o'clock. Gran Via is Madrid's skyscraper street and the Jesuit convent is as noticeable on it as is Trinity Church on lower Broadway. It was conspicuous for another reason: the city had been compelled to bend the new Gran Via around it and to pay the fathers 2,000,000 pesetas for a tiny strip of land. A few minutes after ten something happened; some said there were Monarchist cries from the convent, some said there were shots. "Burn it!" Taxis afforded gasoline, and when the façade kindled too slowly, the rear was broken into. Pews, confessionals, altar furnishings, the library—all were heaped together and fired. It took the place all day to burn. When firemen and civic guards came, they dared not lift a finger against the menaces of the huge throng.

On a hill above the ex-royal palace rose the new Carmelite convent (of an appallingly hideous architecture, it must be said). It was wrecked and burned, the inmates already in flight in civilian garb. In another quarter the Jesuits' extensive school of arts and crafts met the same fate. The crowds were not satisfied to see the civic guards sitting helpless on their horses. They began stoning and the guards fired.

Of the 170 convents in Madrid, ten were burned and a dozen barely saved. "Children within," was effective in turning back the crowd. Indignant housewives protected one convent for the dispensary it housed. Gold and silver services, $225,000 in cash from one monastery, a keg of wine from another, were consigned to the police. Lanes were made for monks and nuns to escape. Not until late afternoon were military units, mostly from outside the city, beginning to restore order.

The government, sitting in continuous session, had nearly broken up. Some were opposed to using force against the people, some were afraid, especially afraid lest the army should not obey orders. The Socialist ministers "suddenly saw collapse before us, that we might have to step in alone and enforce a Socialist dictatorship." With placards and messages they combated the strike rumors and got their people back to work, solidly.

Meanwhile the news had flown and clouds of smoke hung likewise over the cities of Seville, Cordoba, Valencia, Murcia, Almeria, Alicante, Cadiz and many smaller places. Of Valencia's sixty religious orders not many were destroyed; of Malaga's thirty churches and convents hardly one remains. In Saragossa, where red-brassarded militia had superseded the civic guards, nothing was touched. In Toledo, where any thrown stone would ricochet off three or four religious establishments, the primate Segura fled, at the demand of his own priests, and no match was lit.

The government hastily announced that Berenguer had been thrown back into prison, the military court dissolved, Monarchist and Catholic dailies suspended; and they promised that they would maintain the civic guard. The official explanation—that it was a joint plot of Monarchists and Communists, abetted by certain religious orders—evoked the fitting newspaper comment: "That's a good one to tell the papal nuncio."

For the coming elections, the "Right Republi-

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cans" are mustering every conservative force in the land. The day of the burnings President Zamora had in his pocket the formal adhesion to his party of the "Left Monarchists" forwarded from Paris by Santiago Alba. Zamora's welcome to all repentant Monarchists, especially those of great possessions, was made public promptly, to profit by any revulsion from "the deplorable events of May 11." They are old politicians. Socialist-Labor, having come out stiffly for law and order, felt itself somewhat in the cart with the civic guards, and is urging a popular militia to replace them. It feels the dilemma of going in for elections with battalions which seem to be more revolutionary than was believed. Its experience of electioneering is limited to April 12. It has agreed to enter the elections *en bloc* with the Republicans, in so far as the provincial parties ratify. This the Socialists of Cordoba refuse to do, saying they will win the ten seats. The Republicans of Valencia also refuse, saying they will win all the seats there. With nothing clean cut, the parliamentary tangle ahead bids fair to swallow up the revolution. That may depend on whether May 11 was a last appearance on these boards or only a rehearsal.

HEBER BLANKENHORN.

A Hoover Expert Walks the Plank

THE DISMISSAL by Department of Commerce officials of Dr. Ray Hall, assistant chief of the finance and investment division of the Department, is of profound significance to American taxpayers and to all students of government. As author of the annual department publication, "The Balance of International Payments of the United States," Dr. Hall has been engaged upon what President Hoover has called "the most important single computation in the entire field of any country's international economic relations."

Dr. Hall took over the work in 1926, and in that year introduced into the compilation more than twenty theretofore unidentified and invisible items totaling a billion and a quarter dollars. Since then he has continued to develop his study of the balance of international payments until he is now recognized as an authority and a pioneer in the field. This is attested by the widespread praise given his work by both foreign and American economists.

His dismissal, which he himself announced a fortnight ago, came after a wrangle of many weeks' duration over "The Balance of International Payments of the United States" for the calendar year 1930. Dr. Hall states that his superior officers in the Department of Commerce asked him to change some of his figures and interpretations. "They wanted me to omit or suppress certain facts as I found them in my investigation, which I try to keep scientific. That surely is making a forced use of figures. When I refused to change my work, they summarily dismissed me."

Grosvenor M. Jones, chief of the finance and investment division, who is a lawyer by profession and without any formal training as an economist, deprecates any public attention to Dr. Hall's dismissal. "It is not worth public notice," he asserts. "It is simply a dispute between Dr. Hall and myself." To Dr. Hall's charge that an attempt was made to have him "make a forced use of figures," Mr. Jones joins with Malcolm Kerlin, administrative assistant to Secretary Lamont, and O. P. Hopkins, first assistant director of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, in stating that "it was just the reverse."

Mr. Jones's letter to Dr. Hall, dated June 4, 1931, demanding his "immediate resignation," cites the following four reasons for the demand:

> 1. Your unwillingness to accept suggestions for the guidance of your work.
> 2. Your disinclination to follow instructions dictated by bureau policy and transmitted to you as coming from the directors.
> 3. Your insolence and disrespect, which recently have become intolerable.
> 4. Lack of confidence in your judgment, not only on my part but also on the part of bureau officials.

Strangely enough, neither of the two leading officials of the Department of Commerce, Julius Klein and Secretary Lamont, has said a word on the matter publicly. Dr. Klein has said a good deal to newspapermen privately, however. When publicity on the dismissal appeared inevitable, he successfully kept it at a minimum by assuring the inquiring correspondents that the balance-of-international-payments document will be published just as Dr. Hall wished it to be, except for "a regrouping of his figures," and that it was, therefore, nothing but a "personal difference."

So far as I can learn, neither the United Press nor the Associated Press has carried a line out of Washington on the dismissal. This is a sincere news judgment on their part—an extremely interesting one to me. As one of their correspondents put it, "Just a couple of statisticians scrapping, without anything vital to the public in it." And, as another correspondent added, "If they run the balance of international payments as Dr. Hall wanted it, he won't have a leg to stand on." As if that made the news less important. Nor have the New York newspapers received anything on the case from their Washington bureaus, except for

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brief rewrites of the department under-officials' statements which appeared in The Washington Star. Correspondents of the New York press have made no effort to interview Dr. Hall. Only the correspondents for German newspapers seem to have felt the weighty implications of the case.

As a matter of fact, if the document is published just as Dr. Hall wished it to be (it will probably appear in a month or six weeks), I feel that Dr. Hall will have won his point even though he lost his position in the process. It is unthinkable, in view of his high reputation in his field of study, that anyone would have grounds for accusing him of "insolence and disrespect" over inconsequentials.

Dr. Hall replied to Mr. Jones's demand for his resignation with a letter apologizing for any hasty words he may have used—he says that he termed some of Mr. Jones's suggestions "laughable"—and proposing that the work of preparing the document, because of its highly technical and specialized nature, be set up in a separate entity, independent of the policy men of the Department.

In that proposal lies the nub of the issue for the American taxpayer and the student of government. "The scientific men of the Department are overruled by policy men who are altering or suppressing facts that might be unfavorable to the administration," he observes. "The Department is steadily losing prestige because of this condition."

He points to the long period of suppression by the Commerce Department of unfavorable European news and to the subsequent sudden reversal of policy, on the theory that bad news from abroad would help to show that this country is in the grip of a world depression which the administration could not avoid. Nor are the Department of Commerce facts and figures the only ones politically shaped. "Everyone now knows that the unemployment statistics issued by the Labor Department and the administration were not true. Frances Perkins in New York, a genuine scientist in this field, knew it right away when the first figures were given out."

Dr. Hall states that his controversy with the department officials chiefly centered around the following four subjects:

1. The foreword to this year's publication featuring the flow of gold following loans.
2. The presentation of the war-debts situation (his position is that they should not be remitted or scaled down).
3. The section dealing with the wide fluctuation in foreign loans of the United States as the big creditor nation—this country's unwitting contribution to the world's depression.
4. The overvaluation of imports.

The last two issues were in hottest dispute. Bearing out his judgment concerning the effect of the wide fluctuation of United States foreign loans, "a deflating and inflating process," he listed quotations from numerous noted American and British economists, including John Maynard Keynes and Sir George Paish. This section, he explains, met with the adamant department objection, "Why all these complaints against the United States?"

The "overvaluation of imports," which he estimated to be $175,000,000 for 1930, was strenuously resented as "impugning the accuracy of United States Customs statistics." He arrived at this estimate by a study of price fluctuations which took place while goods were in transit from abroad or were held on consignment.

It is apparent that Dr. Hall's work is in a highly technical field. A definition in last year's publication gives it as follows:

> A balance of international payments is a statement of the compiled or estimated amounts of all the invisible and visible exports and imports of a country during a given period, so arranged as to show their comparative size, their total (the international turnover), their influence upon the international gold movement, the "detractive" and "promotive" relationships between them, and the volume and character of the nation's foreign-exchange transactions.

That, seemingly, is extremely remote from the cares of an average taxpayer. It is certainly remote from the understanding of the average newspaper man. But in a year when the tariff problem, the war debts and reparations and other equally important problems are acute, it is fitting to quote the further definition of Mr. George A. Anderson in The American Bankers' Journal of September, 1927.

One falls short of the meaning of our balance of payments, according to Mr. Anderson, if he fails to realize "that it is largely a review of American national life, a record of the nation's international social activities, a reflection of many national habits and customs, and in some degree a measure of our international policies and politics."

It appears, then, to be an annual attempt at one kind of self-appraisal as a nation among other nations—an attempt which Dr. Hall, as economists agree, has pushed brilliantly. He is the first to point out the insecurity of his figures and methods. "I have a whole glossary of qualifying phrases. Of course, a lot of it has to be guesswork."

That this economist, in his pursuit of the hundred and one invisible and visible items, from tourist expenditures to the flow of gold, should be dismissed because of "a personal difference" is unbelievable, unless the Commerce Department officials are unsuspectedly thin-skinned and small-minded. The issue over this document (which first appeared in its slight beginnings in 1922 under Mr. Hoover as Secretary of Commerce) goes much deeper.

It is a clash between the scientific attitude of mind and the policy mind seeking political preferment. The taxpayer will not be wasting his time if he investigates it as symptomatic of one of the major failures of democracy—democracy's rejection of the scientific mind except in the material field—a failure which Mr. Hoover's commissions are doing little to rectify. GARDNER JACKSON.

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Men Without Machines

III: *Their Shelter, Clothing, Health*

FARMHOUSES strung along the turnpike are as rare in Mexico as in Russia. People live in compact villages with their fields encircling them. The most that one sees in the open country are crude huts run up for temporary shelter during road making, charcoal burning, herding animals on far pastures. The villages vary greatly in size; Tannenbaum estimates the average population at 300. Tepoztlan with its 4,000 people is thus more town than village. On a steep pine hillside beside a roaring stream in Oaxaca, I found a miner's village of seventeen families, which is close to the minimum.

The material of which houses are built also varies widely, but follows one relentless law—it is local material. Every youth as a part of his education, will learn how to work that material and build, if need be, his own house. So we find mud, adobe brick, rough stone, cut stone, rubble and occasionally wood on the plateau, and thatch, bamboo, native grass, wood, and mud in the *tierra caliente.* Roofs run to thatch in the latter and red tile in the former, but a long, lean rough shingle is also much used.

Where topography permits, the village plan tends to be uniform throughout the nation. It holds for towns and cities as well. It consists of a central plaza, with the main church at one end, shade trees, band stand, fountain or well, space for market. Around the plaza are grouped the *palacio municipal* or town hall, the whitewashed village school, a store or two, and the houses of *los correctos,* lordly structures two stories high with balconies and actual windows of glass. Lanes of dust or cobblestone run out from the plaza, usually in gridiron formation, and along them, reasonably well bunched, are the compounds and houses of commoners, with the poorest on the outer fringe.

Pathetic are the attempts to come to terms with the iron law of depreciation, especially in the churches. I have seen stone walls with beautiful old carving surmounted by a huge thatched roof. The arches had fallen and thatch was the best that local talent could substitute. The architectural ensemble was deliciously fantastic—like an Eskimo hat on top of Bishop Manning. I have seen great buildings, shattered by earthquake, where only one tiny chapel has been salvaged for current religious needs. I have seen curtains of shingle laid across a huge nave, a hundred feet wide and a hundred feet high, to divide utter ruin from an area where mass may still be chanted.

Increasingly Mexico runs to the little white schoolhouse. Three years ago in the state of Oaxaca, fewer than one hundred villages had federal schools; now (January, 1931), there are 417. When journeying across country on horseback one may obtain a letter from the educational authorities giving permission to sleep on the schoolhouse floor. It is the most sanitary place in town. There may be no municipal building, no band stand, no iron balconies, no store—but there will be a school.

The plaza buildings tend toward the Spanish-colonial type, but the compounds are almost pure pre-conquest. In the larger towns, the plazas are often beautiful. Witness Taxco, with the great cathedral towers looming above the wild fig trees, and the booths and rainbow market on the west side. Near the plaza we find the open-court style of architecture—sometimes in the hands of one family; sometimes the court with its fountain and flowers serves a whole regiment of families.

Tepoztlan, as we saw in the first article, follows the standard village pattern. Let us analyze the shelter of its citizens, who live in the seven barrios reaching back from the plaza.

The Aztec influence is shown in the same pre-conquest rectangular dwellings with windowless walls of adobe, stone or wattles, roofed sometimes with thatch or flat baked mud; the same dirt floors and absence of chimneys. Outside, the flowers and the outbuildings are still Aztec: a circular six-foot storehouse for corn on the cob, and a vasiform granary, mud plastered, for shelled corn; a fowl house, and a two-room rectangular stone bath, or *temazcal.* Inside, the hearth, clay griddle, stone and pot—the domestic big four—are literally unchanged from Aztec days. So are the mortar and pestle, the sleeping mat or *petate,* the cradle or small hammock for the baby, the clay toys and ornaments, the bright baskets, rush brooms and lovely rush fan to stir the fire.

The Spanish influence appears in the red-tile roofs on many houses, the charcoal brazier, sometimes displacing the old hearth and griddle, the steel knives, the candles and kerosene flares, the decoration of the household shrine; also in occasional newspaper pictures and postcards pinned on walls, and in the houses of *los correctos,* china dishes, metal pans, sideboards, beds, brick floors, glass, iron grillwork, plastered walls, hinged doors.

From both Aztec and Spanish traditions come pottery essentially Mexican, stools and benches and water tanks. Of these furnishings the majority, in both number and tonnage, come from the valley, or may be had in the plaza market by virtue of village exchange. From the outside world arrive kerosene

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for the flares, bar iron and silver for local fabrication and the furnishings for the houses of *los correctos*. None of the outside shipments is in any quantity. The few local specialists who assist in this department include three carpenters, four masons, brick-and-tile makers, rope spinners, two iron-workers, silversmiths, charcoal-burners, woodcutters—all more or less on part time.

Of the furnishings of *los correctos*, the less said the better. The observation holds for all upper-class Mexicans. Indeed the more wealthy they are, the more appalling their taste. With exteriors in the gracious colonial pattern; with flowering patios, great high rooms beautifully dimensioned, charming ironwork balconies, the furnishings themselves remain inconceivably bad. They date more or less from Maximilian and Diaz, and are assembled from the worst products of late Empire French and Victorian English. They show how desperately this class of Mexicans sought to evade their own country. The lovely old Spanish pieces have gone to the Thieves' Market or into foreign museums; the handicrafts of the Indians have never been admitted; and we are faced, if you please, with iron alligators whose tails curl gracefully up to support a marble table top on which perch china shepherdesses, kewpie dolls and collections of sea shells.

The houses of the well-to-do in Middletown are in violent contrast with those of Mexico. They are better inside and worse outside. The total effect is an architectural vegetable soup, boiling the leftovers of centuries. In Mexico the solid colonial pattern lines the street: massive stone walls, overhanging tiled roof, grilled balcony, portal of old carved wood. The eye follows the just proportions, the clean lines, the blended colors, and is at peace.

Inside, however, American taste, for all its standardization, is vastly better. Indeed, the only advantage of the Mexican interior—and this reflects particularly upon the American apartment house—is its feeling of unlimited space. Stuffy furniture loses something of its biliousness in a room that one can hardly see across. There are a few old Mexican palaces furnished in colonial Spanish and Indian handicrafts. Mr. Morrow has one in Cuernavaca. When so arranged, they are without exception the most delightful houses in the world.

The habitations of the commoners south and north of the Rio Grande disclose a contrast even more violent. The Indian village is compact, comely, unified. Often it melts into its background of forest and field. The poorer districts of the American town are eyesores, whether back of the railroad tracks or out in the newest suburban development. The supreme contrast is a matter of tonnage. In the consumption of food the wayfaring Mexican probably eats as much, in bulk, as the wayfaring American. In the consumption of housing I should estimate that the American leads by at least ten to one. His house is larger, more complicated, more interconnected with public utilities and replete with far more stuff. One reason of course is the northern winter, with its mandatory heating systems and tons of fuel. Another reason is that Indians have never been educated in the philosophy of acquisition. The rise of the Joneses leaves them cold. Their wantlessness is the despair of salesmen.

In Tepoztlan both Spaniard and machine have made wide inroads into the Aztec costume—particularly the latter. Fifty years ago the prevailing dress for women was a homespun skirt, white above the hips and black below, and a white triangle of similar homespun worn over the head like a poncho. This was the indigenous Indian garment. The number of women who wear it today is small and steadily diminishing. About the only Aztec item which survives strongly is the sandal. There are, however, a number of Mexican elements which represent a fusion of Aztec and Spanish, to wit: The *sarape*, the bright-colored blanket worn by men of all plateau peoples, overcoat during the day, bed covering at night. It has a hole in the middle like a poncho. The *reboso*, or shawl, which Indian women wear over their heads to ward off the sun (they seldom use sombreros); to carry their babies in, normally slung over their stomachs; and to don modestly when entering church. Beads and earrings, derived from both old Mexico and Spain. The sombrero, perhaps the item which first comes into focus when one thinks of Mexico. The Toltecs and Tarascans, with their rainbow *panaches*, contributed something to it; Spain contributed something. One hardly ever sees a bare-headed male Mexican. The sombrero ensures against sunstroke, sheds water like an umbrella in the rainy season; groceries may be carried in its brim; it can be used to fan a fire; and above all, it gives dignity to the soul.

The men of Tepoztlan wear shirt, blouse and trousers cut by their women folk from bolts of white cotton cloth, and made up on the sewing machine. The general effect is that of pajamas, although the blouse is shorter, the trousers crossed in front and the total costume less negligée than what we term pajamas in the north. Males are given to colored vests and gaudy sashes on occasion. Sombrero, sandals and curved *machete* complete the usual attire. In addition a man may have an outfit of store clothes, sack suit, felt hat and factory shoes, for use when he goes to the city. Men of *los correctos* will be found in European costume or in the tight trousers of the *charro*, rows of silver buttons down the side, like the keys of a flute.

Women wear white cotton underclothes, petticoat, overskirt of ankle length, full and gored, a collarless blouse tucked into the skirt, an apron, a sash, usually locally woven. Overskirts and blouses may run to vivid colors. For Sunday and fiesta a one-piece dress may be available. Earrings and necklaces appear. Bare feet are perfectly good form. Hair will be worn in long black braids, tied with bright ribbon. The bulk of this clothing is home-made from store cotton.

The only specialists in Tepoztlan catering to the

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above confections are the storekeepers, two shoemakers and five barbers. Every item on the clothing list is obtainable from the valley or from village exchange in the market, with these important exceptions: cotton cloth, factory-woven *rebosos,* figured handkerchiefs, bone buttons, store clothes. Without the bolts of cotton cloth it is safe to say that the present clothing regime of Tepoztlan would break down, but not immediately. Garments last many a long month and never go out of style.

Middletown of course has a vastly more extensive and costly wardrobe than Tepoztlan, but I doubt if it gets full value for its money. Its men are far less appropriately and picturesquely attired; indeed, the costume of the male in the machine age is a scandal and a disgrace. One would no more think of painting him in his normal regalia than of lithographing a gas range. Nine Mexican men out of ten make one itch for brush and palette. Not so much can be said for the Mexican woman. On the whole, I think the girl of Middletown today is more becomingly, as well as more expensively, attired. The south has three advantages, however: a bold use of bright colors which sun and atmosphere sanction; bare feet or sandals which give her the carriage of a queen; complete indifference to changes in style.

The contribution of Spain to the health of Tepoztlan was smallpox, whooping cough, diphtheria, syphilis and fear of the Evil Eye. These maladies were unknown to the Aztecs. Yet against their inroads the only therapy continues to be the Indian one. There is neither doctor nor nurse in town. There are, however, thirteen herb doctors, two magicians, one priest and ten midwives, dealing in the 110 remedial plants and herbs which are collected in the surrounding hills, together with a reasonably rich output of therapeutic hocus pocus.

The commonest explanation of sickness in Tepoztlan is that one has been attacked by *los aires* (the airs, the winds). They are the evil spirits of the air, and are found at water tanks, in ravines, at public washing places, in the rain. They are thought of as very little people. This concatenation of little people and water is most unfortunate. It makes washing extra hazardous. Remedies are various, including amulets, and anointing with certain herbs and internal doses—such as a tea made from powdered woodpecker's head.

There is a hospital at Cuernavaca, and doubtless by this time health posters in the Tepoztlan school. The central health authorities in Mexico City have an excellent habit of calling out the army, encircling a given village and vaccinating every man, woman and child. Knowledge of modern medicine is making headway. As it grows, it causes no little confusion. There is reason to believe that the preconquest peoples, besides having fewer diseases to combat, came nearer to a genuine therapy than Tepoztecans today. Their priests had an extraordinary knowledge of herbs—certain of them, such as quinine, perfectly sound for specific disorders. Herb doctors today are less intelligent, the body of knowledge has degenerated, while the Spanish contribution of the Evil Eye has run riot in Mexico, complicating the situation. The miraculous Spanish virgins and *santos* offset the Evil Eye, and at the same time double the complications. When thousands kiss the same stone, contagions are uncontrollable.

Child mortality, as calculated by Pani, averages about 40 per 100 for all Mexico, rising to 50 in the capital. This compares most unfavorably with 10 in Norway, 14 in France, 27 in Russia. The death rate from the Spanish legacy of syphilis is seven times as great in Mexico City as in the United States. Gruening, himself a medical man, gives us a very gloomy report of the national health.

Village Mexicans, with rare exceptions, *look* healthy. They have to be, to survive the infections that come their way from faulty diet, spoiled meat, impure drinking water and *pulque,* concourses of invalids at miraculous shrines. The most striking piece of modern architecture in Mexico is the new *Salubridad,* home of the Department of Health. The building is there; its influence on the national death rate has yet to be established.

Tepoztlan is indeed self-sufficient in respect to its medicine, but, in this prime essential, contact with the outside world would be an unmixed blessing, a consummation devoutly to be wished. The door needs to be flung wide open for the sanitation and hygiene of the machine age. . . . With perhaps a shade of hesitation as to the descent upon the village, in full regalia, of a brigade of tonsil-snatchers.

STUART CHASE.

Cabbages and Kings

Americans at the Court of St. James's

WHEN THE name of Mrs. Harry Symes Lehr of Philadelphia and Paris was included recently in the list of American women presented at the Court of St. James's, society paragraphers of the more ebullient Manhattan newspapers expressed surprise and not a little scorn that an American woman of her eminent position in international society should "bother" to seek so empty a social honor as that dependent upon a curtsy to their Britannic Majesties.

The consensus intimated that Mrs. Lehr did not have to covet what has become largely the prerogative of socially ambitious ladies from the hinterlands; the privilege of the sisters and the cousins and the aunts of mushroom capitalists who have seen the main chance in chain stores, patented breakfast foods, Oklahoma oil and chewing tobacco; and the inalienable right of wives whose husbands have let the right Senators, if not the right hand, know what the left contributed to the political war chest.

What was once a social achievement has long

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since become a political favor, a bonus awarded big business by a grateful government and a rung in the ladder of the ambitious matron whose goal in life is to speak to Mrs. Vanderbilt. To the end that she may speak to Mrs. Vanderbilt, the social climber is prepared to Endure All. If the aspiring lady is convinced that a curtsy to the King and Queen of England is a step in the right direction, by hook or crook she will wangle a summons, spend a small fortune and undergo the mental anguish attendant upon backing a satin train out of the presence of royalty. Hundreds of American women annually clamor for this honor. It is then the privilege of the American embassy in London prayerfully to cull from this multitude of nominees the names of some thirty-five or forty exultant women who are to receive the coveted summons.

It is said that no task confronting the embassy is approached with such dread or is so fraught with peril as that of selecting the debutantes who are to go to Buckingham Palace. It is a thankless and fearsome job that drives strong attachés and under-secretaries into hysterics and an early grave. The butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker, Senators, Congressmen and Cabinet members who have sponsored each candidate, are only too apt to bring pressure to bear. Not only must the embassy appease its own nationals, but it must choose such names as will meet with the approval of the British court. In the face of such odds, the great task of diplomacy—that of making everybody happy—may falter at times.

Eventually the embassy completes the list and informs the winners of their victory. At this same time the embassy solemnly warns each and every candidate that under no circumstances must she announce her conquest to her public until the list is made public officially by the embassy itself. Nothing gives more offense to the British royal family than the use of a summons to court for personal aggrandizement. The woman who is unable to grapple successfully with this delicious secret and who uses it as a springboard to the front page is apt to be informed that her summons has been canceled by the court chamberlain.

Although the public is still treated to lengthy accounts of each debutante's gown, jewels and ancestry (for which papa's business connections and list of interlocking directorates may be substituted), it is spared, thanks to the embassy's ban on "follow-up" interviews, the deb's rhapsodic reports of the brilliant goings-on within the palace. Despite diplomatic strictures, pretty swell publicity is bound to "happen," and, at this point enters, center front, Big Business, which knows that publicity has long since replaced competition as the life of trade and social success.

When a man, through his own efforts, has achieved the title of Candy Bar King of America and $100,000,000 in the bank, he begins inevitably to cast about for symbols to proclaim his advance. Already he has proved his meteoric progress to the world by buying his women folk all the diamonds, yachts and country places they can use. By their presentation at the Court of St. James's, he further demonstrates how far he has traveled the road to Success. He has attained to a position in which his own government cannot deny him a favor and the king and queen of another are happy to receive his wife and daughters.

He who started his career with a bicycle and ended with a gigantic automobile factory and a diplomatic post in Europe; he who directed his genius to pouring soup into tins and distributing it to a waiting world; he who gambled on the chance there was more to radio than static; he who discerned that oats were as nourishing to man as to beast; he who discovered that nickels will nurture chain stores—all have seen wives and daughters struggle with unfamiliar court etiquette and bend the knee to crowned heads.

Newspapers were not slow to point out this season that two of the debutantes summoned to court were granddaughters of the late Frank W. Woolworth; a third, the daughter of a vice-president of the American Tobacco Company; a fourth, the daughter-in-law of a Republican National Committeeman; a fifth, the daughter of an official of the International Telephone and Telegraph Company.

And thus it goes. If one is so minded, he can bemoan the changing of the Old Order. The more practical soul will shrug and ask, hypothetically, "What of it?"

INEZ CALLAWAY ROBB.

Washington Notes

Booming Baker—Mr. Young Is Coy—Two to One on Roosevelt—Mr. Hoover's "Agin'" Speech

THERE is a theory that politicians and political writers who spend nearly all their time in Washington are out of touch with the real country and do not know what is going on. On the other hand, I am convinced that while that may be true so far as local state conditions are concerned, there is no other place where the necessary political comparisons can so well be made or the political facts checked one against the other. For instance, take the present Democratic situation, which, because of the party's 1932 prospects, is much more interesting than it has been in a number of years. I do not think that anywhere else could the decline in the Owen D. Young boom for the presidential nomination and the rise of the Baker boom be seen so clearly.

That this is what has happened within the past two or three weeks will, I think, be conceded by most judicious and informed observers who have been sufficiently interested to note the trends exhibited by the politicians who have been drifting in and out of this city. The Young and the Baker booms are interesting because Mr. Young and Mr. Baker happen to be the two most conspicuous and important dark

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horses in the Democratic-nomination field, which is concededly led by Governor Roosevelt. In this place last week I spoke of the reported support of Mr. Baker by ex-Governor James J. Cox of Ohio as practically ensuring the delegation of that state for him, and I also mentioned the discouragement of Mr. Young's friends at his failure to "coöperate."

Since then there have been several more or less interesting developments tending to send the Young stock down and the Baker stock up. For one thing, there is not the slightest doubt that the Supreme Court cracks at the Radio Trust with which Mr. Young is so completely identified have had a depressing effect upon his prospects. There is no space here for details, but it is sufficient to say that the unpopularity of the R. C. A. has a tendency to diminish Young's chances.

Another little thing which has discouraged the high-powered, moneyed gentlemen who have been so enthusiastically at work for Mr. Young is the apparently incurable habit Mr. Young has developed of telling why he cannot be nominated. To newspaper men, to politicians, to business men and to others who bring up the question of the presidency, Mr. Young quite frankly explains that the "Power Trust" and his General Electric connections are a sufficient bar to his nomination if there were not other matters such as radio. In fact, Mr. Young makes out as strong a case against himself as anyone else makes out against him.

Some acute fellows with whom I have talked are not sure that Mr. Young is doing himself much harm by private conversational frankness about his handicaps. It undoubtedly has a depressing effect on his friends and at this time has weakened his position. But in the long run it may have a reverse effect. Anything like eagerness to be nominated would be fatal to his prospects. An appearance of reluctance, an obvious effort to keep the nomination from coming his way, may turn out to be his greatest asset. At any rate, that is one of the arguments advanced by those who discuss his attitude from a friendly angle.

They may be right, though I must admit that I have never heard of anyone in politics promoting his fortunes by backing away from the object sought. It is all right to be dignifiedly aloof, to preserve an appearance of indifference, to make it appear a sacrifice of personal interests to accept. Those are common enough positions to have become standardized. But to point out and stress the reasons why one should not be nominated or elected, even privately, is something new in politics. It may be politics of an enlightened sort, but I will be surprised if it works. Moreover, I am not convinced that Mr. Young wants it to work. Skeptical as I am of these coy candidates, I am more than half convinced that Mr. Young's reluctance is genuine, that his belief that he cannot be nominated is sincere.

As for the Baker movement, its increase in strength in the past month is almost in exact proportion to the decrease in the Young movement. As one goes down the other comes up, the reason being that the various elements and factors opposing the nomination of Governor Roosevelt gravitate toward the strongest man to block him. It is certainly true that there is more sentiment for Baker than for any other candidate except Roosevelt. And if political conditions in New York State make it necessary to find a candidate elsewhere, there is no doubt that Mr. Baker will be chosen, despite his League of Nations slant and open-shop advocacy.

None of this means, however, that I am at all blind to the fact that Governor Roosevelt's position is so strong that nothing save a combination of various sorts of bad luck, or an unusual degree of political stupidity, or a much stronger degree of concentration and determination upon the part of his opponents than they now show, can prevent his nomination. I think it is evident that the events of the past month have increased his lead. He may be tripped up or he may trip himself. A year is a long time, and the Smith-Raskob-Shouse outfit seems hostile and confident. None the less, I should say Franklin D. was a good horse to bet on—at least a two-to-one shot. I have never been able to see how Smith can really get into the field against him as a candidate, or how he can switch from him to Young, much as he might like to do so.

On the Republican side, the Indianapolis speech of the "Chief" was by long odds the most interesting and pregnant political utterance he has made in many months. In some quarters it was construed as an open announcement of his candidacy for renomination, and it at least appeared to me to outline the strategy not only of the renomination but of the general election campaign. Most significant was the conservative note. There was in the speech not one progressive thought, hope or aspiration. It was in the main a negation of every progressive proposal that has been advanced within the year. He is against the "dole," against national ownership of public utilities, against "government interference" in business, against "unnecessary" public works, against an increase in taxation, against, against, against—most everything except the Hawley-Smoot tariff, which he has to defend, even extol. It was, as one observer expressed it, an "agin' " speech.

To me, the significance of this is the evident purpose of Mr. Hoover to ignore completely the progressive West and make his whole appeal next year to the "business interests" of the East. As a matter of fact, some of the administration politicians are entirely candid about the calculated nature of this strategy. There is, they say, nothing else to do. To win, the Republicans must hold the industrial states of the East. To hold these states they must retain the support of the business and financial interests. The unshakably Republican states west of the Mississippi can be counted upon anyhow against any Wet Democrat. With them and the New York group, Republican control of the electoral college is assured unless there is a complete upset.

It is their belief that if they are to win at all, they must use those tactics. Hence the conservative note is the one to be sounded by Republican orators, spokesmen and writers. The insurgent Senators are to be ignored, the progressive states left to themselves. The Republican effort will be concentrated upon holding the East, where most of the electoral votes lie. An improvement of measurable degree in business conditions, it is claimed, is all that is needed to hold these states against the Democratic assault next year.

So runs the argument, but the Republicans are not particularly confident about it. I have pointed out before the alarmed and apprehensive state of mind of the hard-boiled Republican wheel horses who know conditions and read the signs. The general theory about the East would be sound

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enough if Republican conditions in the states east of the Mississippi were normal—but they are not. On the contrary, in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Massachusetts and New York, the Republican organizations are in a frankly discouraged and demoralized condition. Not in years has there been as much internal party trouble in as many important states. It will take a lot of work and considerable luck to get the party machines in these states back to the point where they function smoothly again. Nearly all of them have been smashed up by local Democratic victories and intense factional feuds.

When you add to this condition the prospect that at least two important and heretofore regular Republican newspapers in the East are apparently ready to support almost any Wet Democrat against a Dry Hoover, the administration strategy of concentrating in the East with an appeal to the conservative and solid business interests does not seem as promising as it otherwise might be. Still, what other strategy could this administration adopt? Mr. Hoover would be ridiculous in any but a conservative role, though it does not follow that even here he is free from absurdity. At any rate, the Indianapolis speech of negation settled any doubt of his conservatism. It is complete.

T. R. B.

Washington.

A COMMUNICATION

Mr. Mumford, Mr. Haskell and the Factory-Built House

SIR: There still seems to be something disturbing to sentiment in the idea of a manufactured house. Although it can be proved that in an industrial environment the only possible way in which most of us will ever come to live in new, appropriate houses rather than in old misfit hand-me-downs will be through the factory, even the friends of good housing tend to imagine obstacles into the factory's way. Perhaps they cannot conceive of big industry falling into a humane role. Mr. Lewis Mumford, in The New Republic of June 3, assumes some such position. He calls the manufactured house a "mechanical" one, which it distinctly is not. And he finds it a "flaw" in this "mechanical" house that it does not carry its own town planning with it complete, which no type of house does, least of all the present jerry one. Town planners we shall always need.

Now, when houses are built mainly in the factory, will they therefore be "mechanical"? Not at all. Year after year we have been receiving the bulk of our domestic products from the factory, with never a thought of machines. Our clothes come from there, our books, lamps, dishes, rugs, deep upholstered chairs, soft mattresses and fine curtains, not to mention a share of our food. The house itself, for that matter, has come to be built of factory-made parts and with factory-made tools. The only difference is that the standard parts and tools are at present all directed toward an utterly haphazard method of house design and a wasteful method of erection. In the future the manufacturer will design *combination* units, and will erect them himself.

I wonder whether Mr. Mumford fully appreciates this difference between a building made up of factory parts and one made up by factory assembly? If he does, I fail to understand how he can restrict the main field of possible savings to the "shell," a mere 20 to 30 percent of the total investment. Such a calculation as that omits the plumbing, and instead of being a high point of industrialization already achieved, as Mr. Mumford implies, plumbing gives a good example of factory production vitiated, because the products now have to be designed for installation by random crews of workmen in connection with entirely unrelated floors and walls, with a different plan every time. The cost and waste of plumbing are proverbial. As for the house as a whole, its erection is comparable to having a crew of garage mechanics throw together a car in the back yard, for which the wheels have been bought from one manufacturer, the chassis from another, the motor from yet another, and so on down the line, none of the manufacturers being connected with the rest.

This is the difference in production methods that Mr. Mumford seeks to minimize. Yet since he seems willing, on the whole, to grant that a manufactured house will be technically better and cheaper than one built by contractors, let us pass on to the other factors, which in his calculation occupy 40 to 60 percent of the total investment: namely, the cost of financing and of land—in short, the costs of distribution.

"The factory-built house, or multiple-family dwelling," we have said, "can be financed as cars and radios are, with an enormous expansion of credit, and increased independence of the land." Let us elaborate.

When a worker buys his Ford or his Chevrolet on credit, the salesman who sells him the car is also the salesman of the credit. He visits no other office at all. One transaction, and the business is finished; the credit costs him about 8 percent, and, more important, he can *get* it. Not so with the financing of a house. Once more, just as in the production, there is an endless chain. The harmonizer of the mess this time is perhaps the real-estate man. There is a description of the process in the book "Middletown." A man buys a house in a real-estate development. Before the deal for that house is finished, it involves so imposing a group of local real-estate men, bankers, architects, contractors, subcontractors and sub-subs, that the detailed list reads like the roster of a whole Kiwanis Club. Each is a separate independent business man, to be bargained with, hired, squared, hurried, mollified, perhaps sued, paid, perhaps paid a little extra, and so on.

Such are the regular petty brigandages that harass the house while it is being built, not to mention the irregular ones that make the construction industry the great mother of rackets; each delays the completion of the house and causes land to stand idle; each imperils the success of the undertaking; the sum of them all is accurately reflected in the tremendous cost of second mortgages, which in addition to the interest rate, generally 8 percent, carry discounts of 10, 20, 30, or sometimes as much as 40 percent, on those occasions when the credit is to be had at all. The entire enterprise should be covered by a first mortgage of 6 percent—the house paying less for money than the more ephemeral automobile.

Then there is the question of the land. As Mr.

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Mumford says, the difficulty lies in the monopoly aspect of land ownership; but this monopoly, like all monopolies, rests in turn on the fact of dependence, so that anything which decreases dependence on the land also decreases the power of monopoly. Naturally, therefore, a building of which the construction cost can be quickly written off and which can easily be dismantled and either set up again elsewhere or economically scrapped, has a decided advantage over the strange conglomerate of sticks and paste built in the lower ranges of cost today, which, apart from the particular site, amounts to practically nothing but a pile of rubbish.

The factory promises no Utopias. But it does do the indispensable preliminary work. It is no bogey, but the agent of organization. (1) By organizing production it gives a cheap and rational series of wall, room or house units. (2) Being more standardized, these are more commercially negotiable than haphazard ones, and immensely simplify sale and credit. (3) Being more flexible, they become less dependent on the site. Only when these successive steps of organization have been approximately achieved can we begin to think about (4) town planning.

For until those of us who earn less than $2,000 a year can live in quarters decently new and adequate, town planning will have to be built around the old hand-me-downs or else proceed as the ambitious projects hitherto have proceeded, with heavy subsidies, exceptionally favorable locations, limited dividends, or other forms of disguised borrowing. Either of these alternatives makes housing depend essentially on charity: in the first case the poor people wear out the rich people's old clothes, and in the second they receive largess.

Now, whether the individual housing units are built by contractors or the factory, the planning problem is to unite them to the network of water mains, gas pipes and sewers, telephone and electric conduits, streets, transit lines and the system of protection by the police. With the manufactured house, this is simply the problem of uniting a new organization to an existing one, and projecting both into the future. It requires application, but no special fuss, since factory-made units will be quite as flexible as contractor-made ones; and we omitted mentioning it not because of forgetfulness, but because that bridge cannot yet be crossed. Certainly "technicians," such as Mr. Robert L. Davison, who have been developing the manufacturing idea, are quite as aware of the need for coöperating with town planners at this point as anyone.

It is the town planners, especially those who hold the ideal of "garden cities," who, it seems to me, have a choice to make. Will they be friendly to their new ally? They should, for in so far as they themselves hold, for example, to the belief that multiple-housing units are superior to scattered individual houses, it is the industrial principle that they have discovered. Why are large apartment houses and steel-frame office buildings relatively so much cheaper than country cottages and small-town business blocks? Because they have already undergone a far greater industrialization. If factory procedure will do less in the future for large structures than for smaller ones, it is because it has done so much for them already. Let no one think, however, that so long as the Empire State Building carries 10,000,000 bricks, anything like a limit has been reached, even in skyscrapers. Manufactured housing will by no means be restricted to the free-standing house.

Since the town planners themselves already rely so heavily on the machine, we cannot take seriously those of their criticisms that seem to be directed against some of its results without any real alternatives being available. If Mr. Mumford wishes to criticize the automobile because it is a little shy in respect to wind resistance, will he take the responsibility of asking for a buggy back or else admit that his criticism itself is a luxury? If our concrete highways are mistakenly routed through the towns instead of around them, will Mr. Mumford still be gracious enough to admit their vast superiority over the mud road of thirty years ago, with farmers' wagons going distances of two or three miles at a time, provided the weather was good? He deplores the fact that automobiles have killed people (and so have trains), but will he maintain that we should have been better off without mechanical transportation, and hence with a dozen different states instead of one unified country, and a dozen tariff barriers and civil wars instead of one? And when it comes to design, it is not Hart, Schaffner and Marx that make ridiculous suits, but the hick-town tailor; not the Standard Oil Company that puts up the brown-derby gas stations, but the gent from Toonerville who has been to California; the fake timber and imitation plaster that Mr. Mumford confers with so magnificent a gesture on the manufactured house do not fit there nearly so well as on the jerry structure of today, from which for the sake of the gesture they have actually been torn. It is a little irritating to be told that "instead of twelve high-pressure salesmen selling twelve different [bathroom] fixtures, there will be twelve equally desperate fellows selling twelve different types of combination units," when the arithmetic of the case makes the comparison one between a future twelve and a present one hundred and forty-four.

Mr. Mumford's "one or two other little points" that "darken the picture still more" are unfortunately considerations that are not especially germane to the factory-made house, since they apply to our capitalist system as a whole rather than to its details. He speaks of obsolescence: but if factory obsolescence is bad, contractor or jerry obsolescence is still worse; if the factory runs us into depressions with instalment credit, the jerry system is able to extend no effective credit at all. However scandalous our industrial system may be as a whole, it is still more scandalous for housing not to take the advantages that it does offer. I do not see how anyone will be able to evolve a form of "social control" out of the present chaos. Well, then, let us cheerfully take what progress is in reach.

At any rate, industry will. With the automobile and railroad booms over, it is certain that industry with its present large-scale organization will turn to housing. There is a hope involved that, because of its economy, whole sections of the American people will be able for the first time in their lives to occupy something else than a hand-me-down. For the first time there will be a broad base for effective community planning. And if anyone can then obtain full social control, God bless him. DOUGLAS HASKELL.

(A comment on Mr. Haskell's communication, by Mr. Lewis Mumford, will appear in next week's issue of The New Republic.—THE EDITORS.)

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CORRESPONDENCE

From Mr. Coney of England, Arkansas

SIR: In The New Republic of May 27, Mr. Harris' article entitled "An Arkansas Farmer Speaks" I found to be most interesting. I sent this issue to Mr. Coney, and also one issue of The Nation, The New Masses, The Progressive, The American Guardian and The New Leader. Here is a letter I received from Mr. Coney in which I am sure many of your readers will be interested. The letter speaks for him. I would like to know how many readers could help. Send your dollars to Mr. Coney.

CLAY HUBBARD.

Needles, Calif.

[ENCLOSURE]

Dear Mr. Clay Hubbard:

I thought I would drop you a few lines in regard to my story that I gave Mr. Harris some time ago. Every word I stated in my story was true. I have read every one of the papers you sent me and like them all fine, and sure want to thank you very much for them. Well, I'm sure glad you good folks don't think I did some unpardonable sin, for the business men sure gave me a black eye down here in Lonoke County, Arkansas.

I put in for a government loan to make this crop with and they allowed me $195 and sent my check to Lonoke, and the committee there saw who it was and sent the check back to Memphis, Tennessee. They said, "That is the fellow that went to England and demanded food." Well, I am, and I sure ain't sorry for it, either. They let every man's check come through on the farms but mine. Now, if you don't believe this statement come down here and see for yourself, and I will go with you to see every man on the farms and show you my own papers that they canceled and returned to me.

If you know anyone that wants to help a dirt cotton farmer I would like to hear from him. I have a wife and five boys and the oldest is fifteen years old and the baby is four years. I have been a hard worker all my life. I was an orphan and raised myself. When I was twelve years old I had an attack of t. b. of the bone and it left me a bad cripple. In 1907 I met my wife and married, and we have worked side by side till now I am forty-six years old and my wife is forty. Now I am not a-begging, but someone in this dear old United States might have a heart. We have had some times down here in Arkansas and are still having a hard time. I am a renter. I have got forty-one acres in crop this year. I have tried to get able to buy me a home, but about the time I thought I was about to reach the goal, along come 1930 and buried me alive. But I guess you are getting tired of this nonsense. I remain yours,

R. F. D. 2, England, Ark. H. C. CONEY.

Ruthless Russia

SIR: Assuring us this week that "Soviet Russian diplomacy is the best in the world because it is direct and honest," The New Republic cites that classic instance in which Litvinov, a babe among wolves, rose at Geneva some years ago to call in Galahad tones for complete and immediate world disarmament. Guileless as every Slav, the great-hearted fellow made his proposal in purest simplicity, of course. He was utterly devoid of intent to embarrass his colleagues for the sake of headlines back home and was undoubtedly prepared to whistle away the enormous Red Army on the morrow. Perhaps the plan for disposing of the Bolshevik soldiery was already in the pocket of the direct and honest Comrade.

There are some other comparisons with the capitalist and Communist worlds which one of its readers humbly begs The New Republic to draw.

Will it compare freedom of speech in this country and in Russia, pointing out how often democratic meetings are permitted in Red Square and at which Moscow newsstands one can purchase a paper which takes the same relative position toward the Soviet government as The Daily Worker, for instance, takes toward the government of the United States?

Will it compare the freedom of Russian and American workers, explaining whether a Bolshevik engineer would be allowed to leave the Soviet Union to obtain employment in a country which had proclaimed its intention of fostering a Russian revolution?

Will it compare the eviction of an impecunious American tenant with the eviction of a Russian *kulak*, paying special attention to the reasons why the American landlord leaves his tenant on the sidewalk to shift for himself, while the Bolshevik landlord finishes the job by tearing the *kulak* from his family and sending him to die in Siberia?

Will it compare prison conditions in Siberia with those of the most backward states of the South?

Will it compare the American police methods with those of the G. P. U.?

Will it compare its own presentation of the Russian picture with that of the Honorable Hamilton Fish, Jr., demonstrating whether one is of any more use than the other to those seeking the true perspective on the Communist experiment; explaining why, as the militant enemy of ruthlessness and oppression, The New Republic is so faithless to its ideals when confronted by the oppression in the U. S. S. R.?

New Rochelle, N. Y. ROBERT CRUISE MCMANUS.

It's the Rich That Has the Money

SIR: Out of the welter of nonsense written concerning the depression there has at last emerged some common sense, some logic. Gordon Hayes's article in The New Republic of June 3 goes right to the point. It is an admirable article and cannot be too widely read, marked and inwardly digested.

With a little diffidence, lest I might distract any attention whatever from Professor Hayes's article, I should like to add one idea; not that I imagine he has overlooked it, but that it is worth considering. All the spending power derived from the use as collateral of the stock dividends and commission dividends paid in watered stock is also in the hands of those with large incomes.

Mr. Mellon rightly points out that some 380,000 individuals own 97 percent of the income assessable to income tax. Then, with the strangest illogicality, instead of taking part of that excessive income to meet his deficit, he proposes to borrow it from these people and pay them 3⅛-percent interest, thus still further increasing the difficulty under which we are laboring.

R. ESTCOURT.

Oakland, Calif.

Mr. Huxley's Article

SIR: I wish to express my appreciation of the article "Recent Trends in Biology" by Julian Huxley, which appeared in your issue of May 20. For those who have some slight knowledge of the history of biology but are not students of the subject, this concise summary of modern developments and tendencies by such an authority in the field as Mr. Huxley is of exceptional value. In explaining the relative positions of the various subsciences in the broad realm of biology, the author does much to clarify what must be to the average lay mind a very much confused situation; for personally, though I have long known what the cytologists and comparative anatomists have been doing, I have hitherto had only the vaguest idea as to why they were doing it, or of what importance to evolutionary and biological theory their results could be.

Incidentally, I was pleasantly amused by Mr. Huxley's gentle slap at the "metaphysical quality of Emergence," both because he exhibited thereby a healthy and characteristically scientific attitude, and because, of all the recent philosophical fads, Emergence is the most absurdly futile.

PHILIP H. VAN GELDER.

Philadelphia, Pa.

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Pilgrimage to Mexico

Mexican Maze, by Carleton Beals. With illustrations by Diego Rivera. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 362 pages. $3.

FOR INTELLIGENT North Americans to visit Mexico is getting to be a custom; some day it may be almost a tradition. And since intelligent persons in our business world are very likely to write and to paint, the list grows of records—literary, sociological, plastic—of these journeys. The intelligent American, of course, is dissatisfied. Mexico vaguely seems to offer from afar something which he lacks and craves. And still more vaguely and deeply, Mexico seems to be his. In the old days, such persons went exclusively to Europe. Most of them eventually come back—perhaps more distracted than they had gone, almost certainly convinced that they did not belong to Europe. At this stage, Mexico puts in its eloquent appeal. And it may be, unless the capitalistic system collapses too soon to make it necessary, that a "grand tour" to the South will become a part of the education of our more civilized youth. The colleges may soon be so entirely in the hands of time-servers, technicians and aspirant contributors to the Satevepost that it will be a mark of vulgarity to attend them. Europe may have moved so far to the East, under the dominance of Russia and of China, as to be culturally remote. How, then, will we give a real and cogent education to our children? We will provide them with a purse and send them for a season to Tepoztlan or Taxco.

But the analogue for this visit would not be the grand tour which the eighteenth-century Englishman made through Europe before settling down to his parliamentary porridge. It would be rather the Moslem's pilgrimage to Mecca or the Jew's hard-won journey to the Holy Land. And the reason why the comparison is not absurd, is that there is a *devotional* note in these Mexican visits and in the books which record them: a note essentially although, of course, not confessedly religious.

Mr. Beals's most recent volume is contradistinguished from the general run of these American records by the fact that he can scarcely be called a visitor in Mexico. He is at home there; indeed, he has a grasp of the country's myriad phases which few Mexicans can equal. None the less, although his book is full of information and of pen pictures which strive to be cool and objective, the undertone is of true piety. Toward the end of the book, we come across this sentence: "For we cannot do without Latin America nearly as well as she can do without us. Our pride has blinded us to this elemental truth." Whether it be truth or not, this is the key feeling of the work of Mr. Beals; and something like this is the motive vaguely felt, perhaps not realized at all, in the pilgrimages from the North to the lands of the Nahua and the Maya.

It is not a motive easy to unravel from its context within the maze of both Mexican and North American life. And the difficulty, at least, is plain in this book. Mr. Beals is far too pious a man to flatter or to idealize Mexico. Like the Jew who went to Palestine in the twelfth century from the gleaming cities of Andalusia and Castile, he encounters squalor, disease, shards of rotted cultures, hideous vice. Yet the pilgrim, modern and medieval, feels himself at home. Some secret virtue dwells in the dust and dirt; he has sensed it from afar, and now at last it is his.

Mr. Beals does not gild Mexico. Often, since he loves it, he is seen to hate it; and he is careful to temper his devotion with a scrutiny of its shortcomings. But under all, there is a fervor. Some depth of this man has been starved in New York and in Italy; and has been fed in Milpa Alta. Where we are fed, we are at home. The religious Jew, although his ancestors left Palestine twenty centuries ago (or had never been there) may feel at home looking upon Jordan, since there his spirit is nourished. And for the same reason Carleton Beals can make us feel that Mexico is his—and ours—in a way that contrasts poignantly with our lost-ness and strangeness among our own blood-people in Middletown and Main Street.

If Mr. Beals makes no attempt to romanticize Mexico's maze, neither does he give it order. His twenty chapters contain a bit—a good deal—of everything. There are portraits of towns in the high valley of Anáhuac, in the torrid tiers, and in Yucatan. There are portraits of Mexican types: revolutionists, generals, peons, painters, muleteers. The folk's religious life is related as fairly as could be by a man to whom the mystic language of both Indian and Spaniard is external and to be intellectually gauged, not inwardly experienced. Political problems are discussed: the conflict of Church and State, the dangerous duel with Washington over oil. There are chapters on art, on literature, on Mexican street theatres. One is surprised to find how little is given about the basic forces of the Revolution; about the Reaction that set in when Mr. Morrow decided that General Calles was a combination of Jefferson and Jackson. But the real trouble with the book as a source of information is, rather, that it tells too much. Facts, however faithfully detailed, can be received by the mind only if they are ordered. No facts, without location in an organic whole, become truth. And Mr. Beals, although he feels the organic pulse of Mexico, and although he makes us feel it in the reflected throb of his prose, never articulates this life for us, never gives its full form. We rise from the reading of his book as if we had visited a maze. Within that maze, we have dimly sensed a principle of life—an order and direction; and we know that this principle would be an inestimable treasure, if it were made so clear that we could assimilate and use it. Mexico haunts us, as it haunts Mr. Beals. We are even ready to subscribe to the flat statement I quoted above—although the reasons for it are not explicit. But we wonder whether it is not time to make them explicit: to resolve this Mexican maze for our own sake (the maze being, of course, in us); in order that the exchange between the cultures of Mexico and the United States may pass from the present phase of hit-or-miss and become the conscious activity of the two nations to profit by one another.

Mr. Beals's book makes me feel that there is a subsequent work he must give us. "Mexican Maze" indeed gives the impression of an unfinished task. It is raw material, sound enough, yet not ultimately digestible in its present form. Even the prose gives this impression. Mr. Beals does not write as well as an occasional passage makes one know he could. He is a superb journalist; but this is no reason why he should not be an artist. His material deserves it; his own temperament demands it. There is, besides, a lack of judgment in his choice of materials: perhaps it would be better to say there is not choice enough. The book would have been more definitive had it been less panoramic; with fewer "subjects" it would have given more. Mr. Beals excels where his interest lies: for instance, portraits of men of action concern him, descriptions of pure landscape do not. Yet he has permitted the conventional ideal of what the book should hold to deflect his true sense of the subject—a sense which always carries a control of limitations.

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But I do not wish to quarrel with what is probably the best book on the subject; with a work so deeply generous, so quick in response to a tragic culture, above all so luminous with the intuition of Mexico's immediate importance for all intelligent citizens of the United States. This intuition is basic in Mr. Beals; and it saves him from the cleverness and virtuosity which spoil so many of our Mexican records. In a way which would surprise Mr. Hearst, Mexico *is* ours. To us all who would live like human beings, rather than like insects or wolves, in the capitalistic Jungle, Mexico is a mother. Although our feet never leave the sidewalks of New York, there is a soil beneath us; and the more perfect the pavement the more urgent our need of contact with the soil. In Mexico live a folk who, for all their terrible confusions, are the incarnate spirit of that soil. The merger of Indian and Spaniard (for reasons which cannot here be discussed) has achieved that connection with both self and soil without which man must perish: and it is this which our own Protestant culture has denied and which the institutions of that culture progressively prevent us from attaining. Our inherited culture is in agony: the *rigor mortis* of death. Mexico's culture is in agony no less: both of death and of birth. A connection far deeper than economics joins the American worlds in their crisis of transition.

Diego Rivera's scores of sketches give warmth and solidity to the volume; and the publishers have done a good deal better than the average (which is lower in the United States than in most countries) in their choice of paper and typography.

WALDO FRANK.

Cosmology and Science

Science and First Principles, by F. S. C. Northrop. New York: The Macmillan Company. 299 pages. $3.

"SCIENCE AND FIRST PRINCIPLES" is an essay in the cosmological genre which Whitehead has revived. It is an attempt to uncover the system of first principles presupposed by the various scientific theories. The essay contains illuminating and ably written chapters on the history of scientific thought, the theory of relativity, the quantum theory and thermodynamics, and the history of biological thought. Although these chapters are intended to prepare the reader for Professor Northrop's cosmological hypothesis, they may also be studied for the scientific and historical knowledge they set forth. It is these expository sections, in the reviewer's opinion, which constitute the chief value of the book.

As for the cosmological theory itself, for the sake of which the book was written, it is hard to take it quite seriously. The theory is derived from biological experience, and may be best understood by contrast with Aristotle's metaphysics, which also arose from reflection on experience of the same type. The most striking fact that biology suggests is the existence of functional unities. But so difficult is it to reconcile this obvious fact with the ordinary physical theory of reality that a whole school of doctrine has preferred to deny the obvious in order to save the conception of mechanism which has been so basic in the physical sciences and in certain phases of physiology. Aristotle's method of reconciling the unities of biology with the physical theory of reality was, as everybody knows, through the device of matter and form. The functional unities represented immaterial form, and derived ultimately from the pure form which is God. But how could pure form affect the physical universe—how could it change the direction of motion? If form "touched" anything, it would become spatial and would cease to be immaterial. To solve this difficulty, Aristotle has recourse, like all cosmologists, to a metaphor. God does not touch the universe, but the universe is touched by God (without His directly touching us) in the way that one is touched by the sickness of a friend. God thus energizes the universe without doing a speck of work, merely by His divine presence.

Professor Northrop would have nothing to do with the interaction of an immaterial form with physical matter. Convinced by Professor Henderson's study of the blood process that functional unities really exist (Professor Henderson showed graphically that an equilibrium is maintained among twenty different chemical reactions), he looked about for a cause of such organic unities. The cause must be physical if it is to hold physical and chemical reactions in check. On the other hand, it cannot be the ordinary physical or chemical entity because that would not give any functional stability to the system. Professor Northrop finally finds what he is looking for in the assumption of a *macroscopic atom,* a great shell of perfect spherical form which surrounds the universe and introduces "congesting" influences. Such a macroscopic atom, being physical, can affect the course of the ordinary microscopic atoms (i. e., the electrons and protons); on the other hand, being perfectly spherical in form and situated at the rim of the universe, it can, like a cowboy checking a stampede (the author's own illustration), congest the wild kinetic behavior of the microscopic atoms into some sort of order and stability.

As may be expected, Professor Northrop has no difficulty in fitting the loose ends of the new physical theories into his cosmology. Neither had Aristotle any trouble in incorporating the astronomy of Eudoxus and Calippus into his metaphysical system, although, from the standpoint of later astronomy, it would have been far better if he had not undertaken to furnish metaphysical props for these mathematical theories. A metaphysics of the type under discussion is based on metaphors; therefore it can be used for almost any purpose and applied to scientific theories of almost any type, whether to early Greek astronomy or to the general field theory lately put forward by Einstein. The latter hypothesis was offered as an attempt to amalgamate electro-magnetism and gravitation. Professor Northrop shows that his own conception of the macroscopic atom anticipates certain facts about parallelism which are confirmed by the field theory. It is a pity, under the circumstances, that scientific opinion has refused to accept the field theory as technically valid.

One would like to know what cosmologists like Professor Northrop are after. Are they constructing theories for experimental use and verification in the laboratory? If such is their intention, they are taking liberties that no scientist would tolerate in his practical scientific work. Their theories, in fact, afford no edge for unambiguous verification or rejection, which is the essential of a scientific construction. On the other hand, if they are using the present situation in science as an occasion for general philosophic reflection, it may be said that their work is not philosophic enough. They still cling to the visual, spatial methods of scientific thought, forgetting that if such methods were adequate for a complete picture of reality, experimental science, not unverified philosophy, would give us that picture.

The true function of philosophy is not constructing a

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system of the universe, but reflecting critically on the various phases of human thought. In the matter of science, for example, we shall never be able to exhibit the ultimate structure of things, or to show where mechanism ends and organic teleology begins; but philosophy performs a service just the same if it mediates between rival dogmatisms and shows that the various scientific theories, in the nature of the human context, are so many fragmentary methods, instead of being the final blueprints of the cosmic architecture. Even more important than critical reflection on the specific sciences, is the reflection which philosophy devotes to reconciling the diverse functions of the human spirit—science, ethics, esthetics and the religious view of the whole. Because of a dogmatic and ultra-realistic interpretation of science, the other functions of human thought were for a long time treated as illusions In these days, however, when the realistic interpretation of science has broken down even in the laboratory, critical philosophy has again an opportunity—if only it isn't wasted in cosmologizing.

BENJAMIN GINZBURG.

China Is Different

The Good Earth, by Pearl S. Buck. New York: The John Day Company. $2.50.

The Tragedy of Ah Qui, and other modern Chinese stories. Translated from the Chinese by Kyn Yn Yu and from the French by E. H. F. Mills. New York: The Dial Press. $2.50.

WANG LUNG, son of a poor coolie farmer, needs a wife—not because he is Chinese and intends to worship his ancestors piously, but because he is like any Western man craving love and good times. He goes to the house of the great landlord and is given a slave. . . . So that's that! To bring home a woman and thus to spend the first night without ceremony and with no assistance from the elders is, you'll concede, perfect savagery. It isn't marriage. China, the author implies, has no proper way of getting married.

This man and wife, the central characters of "The Good Earth," have their ups and downs; they come very near starvation; they move south to Kiang-she, where they live with the begging people; the revolution, which he doesn't understand, gives Wang Lung a lucky break; he returns home. Still craving love and good times, he brings home a "harlot" wife, thus making the first wife miserable, for she too wants love and good times. Being only a woman —a word which Mrs. Buck uses synonymously with "slave" —O-lan can do nothing but die. This she does, with "a rock as big as a man's head in her womb and a heart full of worms." The author has made her a very good wife and mother by Chinese standards, very faithful, very sacrificing, a good manufacturer of babies. Mrs. Buck makes Wang Lung very sensual and savage, although she calls him "kind hearted." By a quotation from Marcel Proust in the front of the book, she implies that no moral will be drawn. And Wang Lung certainly seems to get more love and good times than O-lan.

It ought to be very moving, to a Western reader. There is only one difficulty. Romantic love is a false center of psychology to ascribe to the typical Oriental man or woman, reared in the traditional bondage to quite different ideals. Although romantic love is second nature to the Western woman, trained to it by the traditions of a thousand years, it would not even be understood by an old-fashioned Chinese wife. By placing the emphasis on romantic love, all Confucian society is reduced to a laughable pandemonium. We have the picture of a man taking an ugly wife so she will be a virgin, finding his own son a rival in his concubine's chamber, placating his uncle's son, who attempts to violate one of the daughters of the house before the father's eyes, and finally introducing the youngest slave of his own household into his bed, under the jealous and hating eye of his youngest son. Every one of these acts is, in Confucian society, an offense so horrible that there is hardly a name for it. Consider a man's taking his own slave into his bed. The pressure of opinion was so great on this point that disgrace would overtake the whole clan for centuries to come; indeed, the sons might well commit suicide if such a fact became known about their father. And a woman is always virgin when she is married in China. Women, yes, even slaves, are terribly touchy on this subject. If their chastity is even once questioned, they may commit suicide (see "The Tragedy of Ah Qui," page 62, for an instance of this, with a slave).

Since Mrs. Buck does not understand the meaning of the Confucian separation of man's kingdom from that of woman, she is like someone trying to write a story of the European Middle Ages without understanding the rudiments of chivalric standards and the institution of Christianity. None of her major descriptions is correct except in minor details. The Chinese as a whole are molded by propriety, or *li,* a term which may better be translated by the Hegelian *Sittlichkeit.* The *way* a thing is done is all important. Thus, a pregnant woman may not eat of bread which is not properly cut. . . . The author's picture of excessive child-bearing is out of proportion. Birth control is unknown in the Far East, but self-control, like proportion, is a fundamental of Chinese civilization. Mrs. Buck's people talk like Western people, violently, without *Sittlichkeit,* and with only one Western virtue, that of frankness, a thing abhorrent to the traditional Oriental. Another great anachronism: Wang Lung starts out as a peasant and ends as a member of the feudal nobility. This could happen more easily in England than in China, where families stay in the same class for generations and where people rise, if at all, only by force of manners and scholarship.

"The Good Earth," though it has no humor or profound lyric passion, shows good technique and much artistic sincerity. Thus, it is discouraging to find that the novel works toward confusion, not clarification. Its implied comparison between Western and Eastern ways is unjust to the latter. Christianity, as is obvious to a number of educated Orientals, has advantages over Confucianism in developing individuals and social sensitivity to individuals. But, being myself somewhat a product of Oriental civilization, I cannot state my own view too strongly: Mrs. Buck, the daughter of a missionary, refuses from the start of her book to admit that there is such a culture as Confucianism —perhaps because she is sure that any relation between individuals involving neither love and good times nor souls' consolation is not and never could have been marriage.

In comparison with "The Good Earth," a slender volume of stories written by Chinese and translated from Chinese to French, from French to English, will prove more significant in the long run. "The Tragedy of Ah Qui" is imperfect, almost flimsy, and seems far from spectacular, until we realize the vast departure that is being made by modern Chinese. Convinced by such men as Hu Shih and D. S. Chang, these writers are the practising converts of a new form of art in a new mode of thought.

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Using the spoken dialect—the *pai hua*—they imitate the complexities of the West. They are *forced* to fight against classicism and Confucian humanism, and they embark on the turbulent sea of romantic individualism, just as men put hastily to haven here in the West. How they may change and modify the gifts of dying Western romanticism is yet to be seen. YOUNGHILL KANG.

Mr. Kang, we believe, is unjust to "The Good Earth" as a novel. In his indignation at what he considers to be a false picture of Confucian society, he neglects the literary qualities of a narrative which, among those published during the past season, was one of the very few that aroused a lasting enthusiasm. But precisely for this reason —because the story is so simple and effective that its accuracy has been taken for granted—"The Good Earth" deserves to be discussed from the standpoint of an Oriental familiar with the standards that underlie Chinese life.—THE EDITORS.

A Lady—and No Gentleman

The Singing Swan, by Margaret Ashmun. New Haven: Yale University Press. 298 pages. $3.50.

THE SINGING SWAN of Lichfield was less swan than lady: she was tall, stout, vivacious, a very real person indeed. Her contemporaries sometimes referred to her as a second Queen Elizabeth, and Queen Elizabeth she was to the literary world of eighteenth-century Lichfield, where she ruled over such celebrities as Thomas Day (the author of "Sanford and Merton"), Canon Seward (her father), the botanist Erasmus Darwin, and the most popular poet of his day, William Hayley. Perhaps her most tenacious claim on posterity may be found in her controversy with Boswell over the merits of Dr. Samuel Johnson, her fellow townsman. Johnson was no hero to the citizens of Lichfield. To the Sewards, who lived in the bishop's palace, the Great Cham of letters was a monstrous creature to be kept at arm's length, and, most terrible of all, a poor relation.

Miss Seward herself had good health, a comfortable fortune, a vigorous personality and the power to attract gentlemen whose value as literary curiosities was no less remarkable than her own. Perhaps the most entertaining of these was Thomas Day. An early and literal-minded convert to the educational theories of Jean Jacques Rousseau, he insisted on carrying them into practice. He came to Lichfield, after receiving his degree at Oxford, with tangible proof of his conversion, in the shape of two little girls, Sabina and Lucretia, whom he had adopted with the intention of giving both an Emilean education and of training one to be the perfect wife. The failure of his experiment, and his distress upon finding that "the wild young things" were miles beyond his control, are among the liveliest of the episodes described in the present biography.

Miss Ashmun never descends to farce, though the temptation must have been hard to resist. Even in Anna Seward's day, when sensibility ran its full course of sighs and tears and fainting spells, the popular poetry of the Virgin Swan was easy game for bright young men with a satiric gift. It was a simple matter then; it is even simpler today, to be hilarious at the expense of Miss Seward's threnodies on the deaths of Major André and Captain Cook. The present biographer, much to her credit, does nothing of the sort; nor does she attempt to defend the talent that produced a novel in heroic verse with a sentimental heroine whose equal was never described in prose. Miss Ashmun's purpose is to reproduce at full length the buxom figure of an extraordinarily active woman, a social lioness whose roar was heard all over England. In so doing, she has given us a valuable commentary on literary life during the fifty years that preceded the birth of the Romantic movement.

Richard Burton, Arabian Nights' Adventurer, by Fairfax Downey. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 300 pages. $3.

IN THE OPENING pages of this biography, Fairfax Downey suggests the possibility of Arabian blood in Richard Burton's veins. This is a charming idea, but it is equally possible that the translator of "The Arabian Nights" was a perfect and lively example of the Victorian adventurer. There was in him a touch of Terence Mulvaney, blending harmoniously with the scientific curiosity of a Charles Darwin and the fierce wanderlust of a George Borrow—or of David Livingstone. Victorian optimism produced men who had indisputable faith in themselves, the law of progress, the healing power of scientific discovery and the eternal stability of the British Empire. Richard Burton, belonging to this generation, made the most of his own bold temper and his thirst for curious knowledge.

From Oxford he wandered to Bombay; from India into Asia Minor, from England to Arabia—then to Zanzibar, Dahomey, Salt Lake City and Brazil—then home again, before setting out for Trieste with a profitable stop-over in Iceland. It is true that his movements were accelerated by Her Majesty's army and the Foreign Office (he was the terror of both), but Burton really loved motion for the sake of motion. He was, moreover, impelled by insatiable curiosity; he overflowed with the desire to see and learn everything; and he mastered a new Arabic vocabulary with the same gusto that sent him off on an expedition to find the sources of the Nile. In the course of his adventures, minor conventions of Victorian society went by the board, yet he held with characteristic tenacity to the major Victorian ideals: witness his wife, in whom he found a real consort; and witness also his glorification of British imperialism, by strictly personal means.

The present biography takes legitimate advantage of the fact that Burton was a glorious fellow to see in action: tall, dark-skinned, with a tongue and brain as quick as his sword arm. He was a histrionic lecturer, a facile translator; his prose and verse were as flamboyant as the disguises he often assumed. His story, as treated by Mr. Downey, has all the speed of a well constructed adventure yarn; and even Isabel Arundell, the virgin heroine, seems the ideal match for the somewhat less virginal hero.

HORACE GREGORY.

Book Notes

BIOGRAPHY

CERVANTES, by T. R. Ybarra. *New York: Albert and Charles Boni. 260 pages. $3.*

The biography of "Don Quixote's" author begins with an exciting account of the sea battle at Lepanto between the Spaniards and the Turks, and the fever-ridden bravery of young Cervantes. Thereafter the scale of all events, historical and literary, is reduced to the efforts of Cervantes to win promotion in the army, to escape from slavery to the Turks in Algiers, to win literary fame, to escape poverty. The last he never won out of. The reader hears much of Cervantes, Philip II, Lope de Vega, Góngora and the rest, but sees little, owing partly to the scanty evidence Cervantes left behind him, and partly to the biographer's desire to make evident the contrast between Cervantes' posthumous fame and the impoverished, unrecognized condition of his life.

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MEMOIRS OF A TERRORIST, by Boris Savinkov. *New York: Albert and Charles Boni. 364 pages. $3.*

Boris Savinkov was one of the leaders of the Terrorist Brigade, which worked with the Socialist Revolutionary party in Russia. He and his associates, who included the notorious *agent provocateur,* Azev, loved terror for its own sake and believed in it firmly as a means of punishing and frightening the Russian government. The attitude of this group is exemplified in the remark Savinkov quotes of Kaliayev, who later assassinated the Grand Duke Sergius, when they were planning the death of Von Plehve, the Tsar's Minister of the Interior: "Kaliayev felt hurt. 'There is no bomb for me. Why for Borishansky and not for me?'" Kaliayev also once said to Savinkov, "A Socialist-Revolutionist without a bomb is no longer a Socialist-Revolutionist." Most of these men had two desires: the desire for victory through terror and the desire for their own deaths as well as those of their victims, as partial expiation of the necessity for assassination. They formed a special branch, all their own, of the revolutionary movement, and their actions had nothing to do with the work of Lenin, Trotsky and their associates. Savinkov's book has the fascination which no detective story possesses, for in addition to the excitement of murder it contains amazing psychological material about the terrorist type.

MEN AND FORCES OF OUR TIME, by Valeriu Marcu. *Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. New York: The Viking Press. 244 pages. $2.50.*

Strictly, these sketches of Clemenceau, Chesterton, Foch, Georges Sorel and others are not biographical; only certain events in the subjects' lives that illuminate political and social trends are selected, commented on and even generalized. And though the result gives a picture of the men in their public, possibly characteristic, attitudes, each picture is more a snapshot of forces they imitate, oppose or direct. The sketch entitled "Croce," for example, deals only indirectly with the Italian philosopher and directly with the course of socialistic hopes in Italy. The author's Hegelian bias in interpreting history allows him a considerable degree of detachment from his subjects' endeavors and an opportunity for more than makeshift judgments. The most vivid of the sketches, the one which seems at once the portrait of a man and of a definite intellectual drive, is that of Lenin.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF LYDIA E. PINKHAM, by Robert Collyer Washburn. *New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 221 pages. $3.50.*

An American success story told in American Mercury style. For two generations Mrs. Pinkham's face has been familiar to every American, yet even during her lifetime she was something of a myth, and many doubted her actual existence. Mr. Washburn has told her story in a lively book, which throws light on some social aspects of the period. Mrs. Pinkham, like most of her sisters in the Mesozoic age of American medicine, was a great believer in home-made remedies. For years she dispensed free to her neighbors a remedy for "female weakness." After the panic of '73, when the family was in desperate straits, she and her three sons undertook to commercialize her Vegetable Compound. At her death, eight years later, the stuff was bringing in $300,000 a year, and in 1925 it grossed nearly $4,000,000. Yet, according to scientific analysis, it contained no specific therapeutic value whatever. Ingenious advertising, appealing to the gullibility of tired, dissatisfied and hysterical women, put the compound over with a bang.

Philosophy

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, by George Burman Foster. *Edited by Curtis W. Reese; Introduction by A. Eustace Haydon. New York: The Macmillan Company. 250 pages. $2.50.*

Using biographical details to interpret certain phases of Nietzsche's thought, the late Professor George Burman Foster expounds the German's views on feminism, militarism, art, atheism, in a manner which will serve as a satisfactory prelude to the man's actual writings. There is in this volume an attempt to give Nietzsche's opinions honestly and sympathetically; and the biographical data are clearly presented. But the final estimate of a philosopher whose mode of thinking, aside from any comment on topical subjects, is almost as alien to our own as Thomas à Kempis', has yet to be written.

THE NATURE OF EVIL, by Radoslav A. Tsanoff. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 447 pages. $3.*

The historical and literary accounts of evil in experience are examined by a professor of Philosophy in the Rice Institute. The examination is of a thorough if somewhat unpenetrating kind; it discusses the solutions offered by the great religions, traces the manifestations of the problem in writers of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and continues through Pascal's rigors of thought to romantic poetry and German idealism. The author's own final "gradational view" derives considerably from later and more romantic preoccupations with evil: "perfection is perfectibility" and "evil is an ever present factor," against which "a possible worthier side or nature affirms itself and gains reality through attainment."

HISTORY OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY, by B. A. G. Fuller. *Vol. II, The Sophists, Socrates, Plato. 493 pages. $3. Vol. III, Aristotle. 377 pages. $2.75. New York: Henry Holt and Company.*

In a rather lively style which occasionally obscures the accurate reproduction of the philosophers, Professor Fuller continues the history of Greek philosophy which he began in a previous volume devoted to the pre-Socratics, and completes the usual round of the ancients with a volume on Aristotle. While the author makes no attempt at original scholarship or interpretation, and presents only the controversial findings of other scholars when the various difficulties appear, his history has a good deal of value as an introduction to Greek philosophy. Other methods of introducing students to Aristotle and Plato and their lesser predecessors might have been found which would allow for some continuity between the problems of Greek and of modern thought without distortions; but Professor Fuller's method will serve. Its prime defect lies principally in a desire to make philosophy "a good detective story."

The Social Sciences

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES, Volumes II and III. Edited by Edwin R. A. Seligman and Alvin Johnson. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 696 and 681 pages. $7.50 each.*

Nobody can review an encyclopedia; general comments on this one were made in The New Republic on the occasion of the appearance of Volume I. Little more is possible, except to note the appearance of the subsequent volumes as they are issued. The information contained seems to be widely varied, both in subject and interest. In Volume III, for instance, we have articles in economics alone which are worth anyone's reading just now, such as "Brokers' Loans," by David Friday; "Business Cycles," by Wesley Mitchell; "Capitalism," by Werner Sombart, and "Collectivism," by Walton Hamilton. Each of these was written before the current depression began, and it is interesting to speculate on what the several authors would have said if they had been writing in 1930. Mr. Friday might not have been so sure of the normalcy of the expansion of brokers' loans, Mr. Sombart might possibly have modified his section about our passage into "late capitalism"—which minimizes industrial fluctuations—and Mr. Hamilton might have leaned a little more toward the fruitful possibilities of general planning. Mr. Mitchell's article would probably require the least change, since it is the most objective. There are inevitable risks in writing about the social sciences at this stage of enlightenment. Nevertheless, it is worth while to set down the best of what we already know and believe, if only for the sake of criticism.

THE MARXIAN THEORY OF THE STATE, by Sherman H. M. Chang. *Chester, Pa.: John Spencer, Inc. $2.50.*

This is an intelligent and conscientious study of the political theory of Marxism: its conception of the State, of the proletarian revolution and of the proletarian dictatorship. For theoretical as well as practical reasons, the author arrives at the conclusion that the true exponents of this theory nowadays are the Russian communists, not the German social-democrats. The author, by the

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way, is a Chinese student in this country; hence an occasional naïveté of expression which does not, however, detract from the value of the study.

Fiction

FATHER, by "Elizabeth" *New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.*

The style of Virginia Woolf is a unique and seductive thing, but in anyone else's hands it becomes all mannerism. That an intelligent, seasoned novelist should seriously impair the individuality and charm of her own work by adopting it (unconsciously, no doubt) is difficult to understand. Hitherto the novels of "Elizabeth" have been a pleasure to read: this one, which is a mild variation of the Cinderella theme, is unhappily a failure, and Mrs. Woolf is apparently the explanation.

TUNNEL HILL, by Harlan Hatcher. *Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.*

By relating the adolescent experiences of one boy in a Kentucky brickyard town, Mr. Hatcher indicates the simple pattern of a whole community's existence. He tells the story of ignorant people—of lives uncomplicated by the perplexities of mature self-consciousness—and of the hard work, lawlessness, debauchery and hysterical spirituality which are the outlets in action natural to vigorous people ruled by unenlightened minds. . . . Harlan Hatcher is the author of the prize-winning essay in the "Thirty or Under" contest conducted winter before last by The Saturday Review. In "Tunnel Hill" he displays some of the essential differences between the literary ideals of his genration and th one preceding. He shifts the emphasis from people's peculiaritis, follies and hypocrisies to their essential humanity; he finds it possible to combine with the love of life a calm and ironical detachment.

Contributors

A. C. Hoffman, a native of Kansas and a product of its schools, was a county agricultural agent there for several years before doing graduate work in Economics at Iowa State University and Harvard. At present he is assistant professor of Agricultural Economics in the University of Wisconsin.

Charles Malam, a native Vermonter who is at present studying at New College, Oxford, as a Rhodes scholar, is the author of a volume of verse, "Upper Pasture," and of two novels: "Slow Smoke," which was published in April by Farrar and Rinehart, and "The City Keep," recently published in England.

Heber Blankenhorn, whose first article on the Spanish Revolution appeared two weeks ago in The New Republic, is still traveling through Spain.

Gardner Jackson, formerly a reporter and editorial writer on The Boston Globe and for four years a member of the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee, is now doing free-lance journalism in Washington, D. C.

Inez Callaway Robb deserted the sagebrush plains of Idaho to be society editor of a metropolitan newspaper.

Douglas Haskell, formerly an associate editor of The Architectural Record, is a frequent contributor of articles on architecture to various magazines.

Waldo Frank's new book, "America Hispano: A Portrait and a Prospect," is to be published in September by Scribner's; and simultaneously the Spanish version will appear in Madrid and Buenos Aires.

Benjamin Ginzburg has lectured at the New School, contributed articles to encyclopedias, written for various magazines and published a book, "The Adventure of Science."

Younghill Kang, a lecturer in the English Department at New York University, was the translator of "Oriental Poetry." He recently published "The Grass Roof," a novel whose setting is that of his native Korea, and is now working on a novel dealing with Oriental students in America.

Horace Gregory is the author of a new translation of Catullus.

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